THE NEW
SUNDAY EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SUNDAY • APRIL 11, 2021 • ₹12.00 • PAGES 26 • LATE CITY EDITION

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CHINA HITS ALIBABA WITH $2.78BN FINE FOR VIOLATIONS

The Jack Ma-led conglomerate accepted the penalty, capping a strict crackdown for abusing its dominant position in market

CRACKDOWN ON MONOPOLISTIC TENDENCIES

The market regulators' probe found that Alibaba had been prohibiting merchants using its platform from selling their wares on rival e-commerce sites. The probe said such a requirement harmed competition, innovation and the interests of sellers and buyers. Though hefty, the fine constitutes only around 4% of the firm's 2019 global sales, totalling $70 billion

JACK MA BRUISED AFTER BRUSH WITH GOVT

- Jack Ma's companies have been on regulators' radar after the billionaire struck a discordant note with Beijing in October last
- His Ant Group's planned $35 billion IPO was shelved earlier this year with the regulators demanding the firm to return to its roots of offering financial services. Other tech firms, too, were targeted

$1 bn

THE PENALTY SLAPPED ON QUALCOMM IN 2015, WHICH WAS THE PREVIOUS HIGHEST

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Sanjeevini to your Life, COVID-19 Vaccine
VACCINATION MISSION
April 11th -14th, 2021
Wear Mask
Follow Physical Distancing
Maintain Hand Hygiene
Mask Up KARNATAKA
To register for the COVID-19 vaccine visit www.cowin.gov.in
If you have fever, cold, or any COVID-19 like symptoms, call the Apthamitra Helpline 14410
If you are above 45 years, get yourself vaccinated voluntarily for the safety of your health.
Support to build COVID-19 Free Society
karnataka information
Department of Information and Public Relations

An injured man being rushed to a hospital after clashes with the paramilitary forces during the fourth phase of West Bengal Assembly elections in Cooch Behar district on Saturday | PTI

4 die in CISF firing in Bengal on polling day

Fired in self-defence, say forces: TMC blamed for 5th death

PRANAB MONDAL
@ North Dinajpur (West Bengal)

VIOLENCE erupted in the fourth phase of election in West Bengal on Saturday, leaving five persons dead, four of them in Sitalkuchi, Cooch Behar, after central forces opened fire on them. The fifth person, a first-time voter, was shot dead, allegedly by Trinamool Congress supporters, in the same area.

Other than the deceased, three others were also injured in the firing, police said. In an initial report, the police said CISF personnel opened fire after a group of 200-odd villagers allegedly attacked them and tried to snatch their weapons.

The Election Commission of India has sought a detailed report. The commission suspended polling in that booth and said the date of repolling will be announced soon.

Cooch Behar Superintendent of Police Debasish Dhar said the mob attacked the CISF personnel after a rumour that a child was beaten up by security personnel in the area.

According to police sources, around 9.35 am, a Quick Reaction Team of the CISF, led by company commander inspector Sunil Kumar, was attacked by a mob of 50-odd locals when they were patrolling along with local police personnel to clear unlawful assembly of villagers.

"The villagers scuffled with the security personnel in which a child fell down. The mob turned violent. The CISF personnel fired six rounds in the air. An SOS was sent and additional CISF personnel arrived at the spot," a police officer said.

Soon, another 200-strong group gathered and accused the CISF of beating the child. They assaulted a Home Guard and an Asha worker who were on duty at the booth, the police said.

"Some miscreants tried to snatch rifles from the CISF. The troops again fired two rounds in the air but the mob started advancing towards them. They then fired seven rounds towards the advancing mob," said an official.

CONTINUED ON: P10

BAR ON POLITICOS' ENTRY

The Election Commission on Saturday put in place certain restrictions, including extending the 'silence period' from 48 hours to 72 hours, for the fifth phase of polling, scheduled on April 17. The poll watchdog also barred the entry of politicians in Cooch Behar district for the next 72 hours to prevent any law and order flare-up. Meanwhile, Bengal CM and TMC boss Mamata Banerjee said that her party will protest by wearing black badges on Sunday. She said that she will visit the area after the silence period ends.

Nightmare revisited for uprooted labourers

MUKESH RANJAN, ANURAAG SINGH & RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ Ranchi/Bhopal/Patna

THE worst nightmare has come true for a host of migrant labourers from Bihar, Jharkhand and UP. Jobless following the nationwide lockdown last year, they had just about started piecing their lives together when the second wave erupted. They have been forced to rush back home after their employers told them they were shutting operations, once again.

Most had gone back to their workplaces in Maharashtra, Gujarat and the National Capital Region or found something new, after the situation eased towards the end of 2020.

Several of them are under pressure to repay loans taken to survive the last year's ordeal. Hoping that things were falling in place after having worked for a few months, they are back to staring at uncertainty.

Mohammed Feroz from Siwan and Aditya Kumar from Buxar in Bihar barely had time to catch trains from Mumbai and Delhi, respectively, after being told by their employers about another looming lockdown.

"I didn't even go to my accommodation but headed straight for the station and luckily got a ticket," says Feroz, who had gone back to the barber shop where he used to work. The 35-year-old, with five dependents, had borrowed ₹2,500 when he went back to Mumbai. Making ends meet, repaying the loan, Feroz has many questions and no answers.

Labourers thronging a Mumbai station after news of a fresh lockdown on Saturday | PTI

Kumar returned to Patna on Saturday. He thought life had taken a turn for the good when the owner of the factory he worked at before lockdown recalled him in January. "He had promised support during bad days, but didn't do anything. It's better to sell vegetables in Bihar than to go to other states where employers stop behaving normally once talk of lockdown starts," says the 25-year-old.

CONTINUED ON: P9

NATION WIDE

	APRIL 9	APRIL 10
Fresh cases	1,31,968	1,45,384
Recoveries	61,899	77,567
Deaths	780	794

Active cases hit 10L-mark after 6 months

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

INDIA on Saturday recorded the highest daily surge in Covid-19 cases at 1,45,384, taking the number of total cases to 1,32,05,0926. As many as 794 Covid deaths were reported in the past 24 hours, which is also one of the highest daily surges in recent times.

With a sharp spike in infections, the number of active cases breached the 10-lakh mark again after six-and-a-half months, while the toll went up to 1,68,436, as per Union Health Ministry's data.

For 31 days now, there has been a steady increase in Covid-19 cases. The total active cases in the country became 10,46,631, accounting for 7.93% of its total caseload, while the national recovery rate further dropped to 90.80% from Friday's 91.22%. According to the Union Health Ministry, five states — Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, UP, and Kerala — cumulatively account for 72.23% of the country's total active cases. Saturday's 794 fatalities included 301 from Maharashtra, 91 from Chhattisgarh and 56 from Punjab.

The Maharashtra government is likely to take a decision on reintroducing lockdown on Sunday.

P9

70% DIED OF COMORBIDITIES

The Health Ministry said that more than 70% of the deaths occurred due to co-morbidities. "Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR," the ministry said on its website

ROADS EMPTY OUT AT 10 PM AS CORONA CURFEW KICKS IN

Police personnel set up barricades and keep vigil on MG Road, ahead of the enforcement of night curfew, in Bengaluru on Saturday | VINOD KUMAR T

KARNATAKA

	APRIL 10	APRIL 9
Fresh cases	6,955	7,955
Recoveries	3,350	3,220
Deaths	36	46

7.04%
Positivity Rate on April 10

98,790
Samples tested on April 10

56,26,481
Total vaccinations achieved so far

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

WITH the 11-day 'corona curfew' coming into effect from 10 pm on Saturday, business establishments across Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Bidar, Tumakuru, Udupi-Manipal cities downed shutters well before the appointed hour. The night curfew will be in force between 10 pm and 5 am every day from April 10 to 20.

In Bengaluru, which has been recording the highest number of new Covid-19 cases in the second wave, all shops, restaurants, pubs and commercial establishments across city were forced shut much before 9.30pm on Saturday and hubs like Church Street and Brigade Road wore a desert look.

Traffic thinned out after 10 pm and senior police officers were monitoring the situation. About 47 flyovers across the city were closed to traffic and Karnataka State Reserve Police (KSRP), Home Guards, Civil Defence along with police personnel have been deployed for security. Around 10 pm, many people were seen at the Brigade Road junction waiting for cabs as police forced them to leave the area.

Most of the hotels around city also shut delivery services as the staff were asked to leave the premises. Very few cabs and autos were seen plying and many people faced difficulties getting a cab on time. However, in Yelahanka Old Town, a couple of bars were open till 10.30pm but the local police claimed they were unaware of it.

The police also monitored movement of vehicles on Mysuru Road, KR Market, Chamarajpet, Koramangala, Trinity Circle, Anand Rao Circle, Peenya and other major junctions. All entry and exit points to the city have been sealed. Double roads have been converted to single-carriageways and barricades put up at many places.

A senior police officer said that if the police find vehicles moving unnecessarily, they will be sized and the police department will not issue any passes for the vehicles. The staff at the checking points will check vehicles which are allowed for essential services and transporting daily needs.

P7

AUTHORISATION LETTER

In order to help industries function smoothly, the State Government has permitted the movement of employees to/from their work place, provided they carry an authorisation letter from their organisation, along with authentic ID cards.

Help pours in for Mysuru labourer to rebuild library

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

A day after the library, set up by labourer Syed Isaaq (62) was burnt down by unidentified people, help poured in from everywhere to help him rebuild it. *The New Indian Express* had on Saturday reported about the library, containing over 11,000 books, including 3,000 copies of the Bhagavad Gita and a thousand copies of the holy Quran and the Bible, being torched by miscreants.

Unfazed by the turn of events, Isaaq had vowed to rebuild the library from the scratch. He even visited the site on Saturday morning to provide newspapers to his regular readers.

EXPRESS IMPACT

After reading the report in *TNIE*, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar personally called up Isaaq and offered help to rebuild the library. Commenting on the incident and expressing solidarity with Isaaq, Suresh Kumar told *TNSE* that Isaaq will be offered helped soon and promised to visit the spot in a week.

Later in the day, with the news going viral, an online fundraiser on popular crowdfunding site Keto.org, set up by Fathaheen Misbah, Technology Lead at Infosys, garnered support from across the globe, raising ₹7.3 lakh in just six hours.

CONTINUED ON: P5

WITH THIS ISSUE
INDIA'S NEW POWER TRIP
PLUS 12 PAGES MAGAZINE
NO PLACE LIKE THIS HOME
P2

LOCAL FLAVOUR

In RCB anthem, Kannada illa yaake, ask fans

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

ROYAL Challengers Bangalore fans are elated after the team's nail-biting two-wicket win over defending champions Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League 2021 opener on Friday night in Chennai. And why not? For, the Rohit Sharma-led side have always been the team to beat in the competition.

However, the mood amongst the passionate RCB fans in the state was not quite the same earlier that day. They were a disappointed lot when, about eight hours prior to the fixture, the franchise released its anthem on social media. It had come in for major criticism last season too, as it had just a few words in Kannada while most of it was in Hindi and English. The story did not change this edition too.

At a time where there is a debate over 'imposition of Hindi', some section of the fans have wanted the team to use 'Bengaluru' in the team name rather than Bangalore.

"The anthem was released in 2020 too, and they have not changed it much this time. Only the new players have been added in the video. As RCB is a team from Bengaluru, one was expecting the anthem in Kannada, but there are just one or two lines," said Preetham Karigar from the Namma Team RCB fan club.

What is discomforting for RCB fans is that many other teams across the league, like Chennai Super Kings, have tried to connect with fans, through Tamil which forms major part in its anthem.

CONTINUED ON: P7

EXPRESS READ

Security forces battling militants in J&K

Srinagar: Security forces were engaged in exchange of fire with militants in Shopian and Anantnag, Jammu and Kashmir, on Saturday. The duel was still on at the time of going to print.

US warns Russia over aggression in Ukraine

Washington: The Biden administration is carrying a review of its policies against Russia over its aggression in Ukraine, and the White House has warned the Kremlin of "consequences". P11

NO PLACE LIKE THIS HOME

Aesthetic and utilitarian, this house combines the traditions of North Karnataka with global influences, a must-check for architecture lovers and students

AMIT S UPADHYE @Hubballi

THERE have been instances when the Dasanur family has had to answer the doorbell, only to be met by a tour guide, requesting permission to take tourists around their home. The family's newly built house 'Varnotsava' in Amargol, a suburb between the twin cities of Hubballi and Dharwad, has been the subject of much curiosity and awe in these parts for its unique 'glocal' style of architecture.

Built on 4,500 sqft in the Indo-Saracenic-Gothic style, the 12-room house preserves the lost architectural style of North Karnataka's wooden houses. Be it the doors or gallery railing, there is a distinct throwback style evocative of forgotten designs.

House owners Prakash and Vedarani Dasanur designed every aspect of the house with intimate knowledge of local traditions and global style. For instance, the intricate carving on the three-layered front door, and the doors that lead to rooms, have been inspired by the traditional wood carving found in homes in North Karnataka.

Some aspects of the house are truly awe-inspiring. It has a large dome and four conical structures. Each room of the house has been designed with different colour schemes and patterns. The railings have wooden structures traditionally known as 'gajari khamba'. These small carrot-shaped pillars are often used in windows and porticos of local houses. The round wooden staircase has been built from the crocodile bark tree. The doors and some of the other wooden structures have been fashioned out of teakwood or rosewood.

Vedarani is the aesthete behind the house. An artist and curator of the Utsav Rock Garden in Haveri, and daughter of noted artist T B Solabakkanavar, Vedarani always wanted to do something to preserve the traditions of North Karnataka.

"The structure of our home is inspired by several architectural wonders of India, including the Taj Mahal and Mysuru Palace. The carvings that we have tried to recreate existed about one-and-half centuries ago. We knew that maintaining such a large house would be a task, given that only five of us live here, but we always wanted to create something unique and that too, in the hometown of my husband who was raised in Amargol," she says.

The couple recalls that when construction began in 2016, people mistook it for a church because of the European influences. Neighbours were surprised when the couple invited them to see the house after most of the construction was complete. "When we started construction, several architecture students and faculties started showing interest in the way we were doing it. We allowed them to visit our home for their learning," says Prakash, a businessman.

He says they have tried to blend local designs with styles from other countries. All praise for Vedarani, he says, "My wife is the force behind this house and most of the ideas are hers."

Good architecture should ideally be aesthetic as well as utilitarian, and this house combines both with stunning effect.

"The conical structures and dome in the centre of the house ensure that hot air goes up and the house remains cool. We used stone from Gokak in Belagavi, known as Sanganakallu, which is used in house construction. We used hollow blocks in the upper ceiling and it has worked well, keeping day temperatures under control," he says.

Although most of the house was completed in three years, the detailing, such as putting up art pieces on walls and landscaping the garden remain unfinished.

The family is now planning to throw open the house for visitors on a fixed day of the week.

Visitors include not just those who are curious about the house or want to study its style, but also people from the twin cities who are looking for decorating ideas.

VARNOTSAVA CANVAS

Varnotsava, the name of the house, means a riot of colours

The house has four conical towers and a large dome in the centre

Famous recreated art pieces by Dr S M Pandit and M F Hussain adorn the walls

Special stone from Sanganakallu area near Gokak is used

Architecture, engineering students and those planning to build houses visit Varnotsava

We studied the architecture of several countries and also many sites in India. Each room is octagonal in shape and has a different theme. It was a wonderful experience to get the door carving designs from various parts of North Karnataka

Vedarani Dasanur, curator and artist

Prakash and Vedarani Dasanur with their family | EXPRESS

Most of us have known the Dasanur family for years. When they started building the house, we were amused when a large dome was constructed. In the beginning, some residents thought a new church building was coming up

Nilesh Desai, resident, Amargol

SPICES OF LIFE

This masala business, built by a committed couple and their team of women workers, has had a successful run for 40 years

G SUBHASH CHANDRA @Chitradurga

WHILE business can create a stressful and cut-throat atmosphere for employees, Maruthi Masala, set up four decades ago in Chitradurga district, is cut from different cloth. Most of the employees are women and their welfare is very important for the family that runs the masala manufacturing firm.

In 1979, H Lakshmamma (70) who is illiterate, and her husband Thippeswamy (85) who has studied up to Class 2, hit upon the idea of starting a spice business. But it was Lakshmamma who thought that the business needed something extra. She suggested that they should not just sell raw spices, but try to add value to it.

Starting with Rs 20,000 in their small house in Chikkagondanahalli in Chitradurga district, they now run a business with the latest machinery, which is one of the biggest masala-making firms in Central Karnataka. There are also plans to expand across the state.

"Supporting women was our aim. Some of these women have been with us for three decades and have worked hard for the success of the business. It is because of them that the industry has survived," says T Nagaraj, Lakshmamma and Thippeswamy's son.

Nagaraj, having seen many women struggle in life to stay afloat, has decided to employ only women -- there are 16 in his factory. He also found that women have better work skills, and are precise, which helped reduce wastage.

"After facing a lot of hardship, I decided to start working. I heard of this masala unit which gave jobs only to women, and joined. Now, I not only take care of my children's education, but also my entire family. We are indebted to Nagaraj," says Mehrunissa (35), from Maradihalli, who has worked at the unit for four years.

Sumangalamma (58) has been at the unit for three decades. "My life was in a shambles when my husband passed away. I received a great deal of support from the founder Thippeswamy and his family. They not only took care of me, but provided me with quarters on the premises and treated me like family. It is because of them that I survived," she says.

In the beginning, Lakshmamma taught the employees how to roast and grind the spices, and the proportions that would give the masalas their unique flavour. She continues to monitor the quality to this day, checking every batch of products.

"Quality is very important for us. We check the quality of each batch of ingredients before it is used. We have also sought help from the Central Food and Technological Research Institute to procure cleaning, roasting, grinding and packing machines," says Nagaraj, an Arts graduate.

It is a matter of pride that the brand has customers of all categories – from big ones to individual households – thanks to the range of quantities they sell. "We have reached all sections of society because we have packets from 50gm to 1kg. "Because of this, our products are popular in Davanagere and Chitradurga," he says, adding that most batches are sold out within a fortnight of manufacture.

The road to success was a hard one, Nagaraj recalls. "During the initial days, my father carried masala packets by bus to Davanagere town, then rented a bicycle and travelled across the district to distribute the packets. That's how dedicated he was," he says.

Even after they set up a proper factory in Chikkagondanahalli in 1985, there were many logistical hurdles to overcome. Power supply was erratic, and transportation was difficult. Finally, the family decided to move to an area set aside by the Karnataka Industrial Development Areas Board (KIADB) in Chitradurga district. Another reason for the success of the unit was the credit extended by the Karnataka State Financial Corporation, he says.

I received a great deal of support from the founder Thippeswamy and his family. They not only took care of me, but provided me with quarters on the premises and treated me like family

Sumangalamma

Every day. the employees sort, roast and grind the spices and mix them according to a proportion for their unique taste | EXPRESS

WHAT THEY MAKE

Sambar powder

Chilli, coriander, turmeric powder

Chicken, mutton masala, garam masala

Puliyogare, vangibath, bisibelebath masala

Starting with

₹ 20,000

in their small house in Chikkagondanahalli in Chitradurga district, they now run a business with the latest machinery, which is one of the biggest masala-making firms in Central Karnataka

CM's RECOGNITION

Karnataka State Finance Corporation, which has provided Maruthi Masala several loans since the 1980s, conferred the Golden Jubilee award to the firm in 2010. It was presented by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa (during his first tenure)

EXPRESS READ

Committee formed to monitor lake

Shikaripalya Lake Conservation Committee, formed by the Resident Welfare Associations in Maragondanahalli village, Hulimangala Panchayat, Anekal to monitor the lake conservation and rejuvenation works in Shikaripalya Lake, set an agenda for the officials to follow on Saturday. They listed that a Sewage Treatment Plant be set up at the catchment areas of the lake compromising Electronics City Phase-1, garbage dumping in the lake be stopped immediately and the lake boundary be fenced. The same will be forwarded to the local MLA and NGT. **ENS**

Residents want action over burning garbage

Residents and members of Good Earth Malhar Resident's Consortium from Kengeri have demanded action against panchayat officials for not being able to control burning of garbage, especially plastic, in the open. They also demanded stern action against the dumping of waste in Vruhshabhavathi valley. The residents submitted a memorandum to the PDO, Kengeri. **ENS**

OFFICIALS CATCH SLOTH BEAR, BUT WHICH ONE IS IT?

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

EVEN as officials from the Karnataka Forest Department, Bengaluru Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBBP) and Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) claimed to have caught the elusive wild sloth bear that had evaded capture so far, they are now wondering if it was the same bear they were after. That is not all. Soon after the sloth bear walked into a cage kept in BBBP, photos and videos of bears being sighted in urban areas and villages were sent to officials.

The forest officials from Tumakuru came to BBBP to ascertain if it was was the same nine-year old male bear that they were after, that had been captured in Tumakuru.

A morphological analysis of the captured bear on Saturday and the samples collected of the Tumakuru bear confirmed that they were different. "Since the bear is healthy and all its claws and canines are intact, we decided to release the bear in a different habitat," a Forest Department official told *The New Sunday Express*.

The BBBP staffers confirmed that the Tumakuru bear ran into the Byrappanahalli village side after escaping from the cage. A dart was also fired, but they could not confirm if it hit the bear. "We suspect that the bear, if it was hit, hid in the bushes and slept. A DNA analysis will show if this was the same bear that attacked six people. The analysis takes more than a month, but till then, we do not want to keep the other bear in captivity, as it is healthy," the official added.

However, now, officials are trying to find out about the other bears wandering around where the Tumakuru bear went. On Friday night, there were reports of a sloth bear sighting in Byrappanahalli village and later in Begihalli. On Thursday, a bear sighting was reported near Electronics City. "In the past few days, we have received at least 10 calls from different locations. Around 5-6 videos, photographs and CCTV footage has also been shared with us. We are now finding it difficult to track them as all are from different locations," an official said.

Officials admitted that during the lockdown, many bears were seen wandering around. However, after more vehicles started plying on roads, more such cases were cropping up.

In the past few days, we have received at least 10 calls from different locations. Around 5-6 videos, photographs and CCTV footage has also been shared with us. We are now finding it difficult to track them as all are from different locations
— Official

With Covid on the prowl, city shuts at 10 pm

The state government had announced night curfew between 10pm and 5am every day from April 10 to 20 in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Bidar, Tumakuru, Udupi-Manipal cities. (Extreme left) From 9.45 pm, people started thinning out at MG Road. Police set up barricades at different parts of the city to check two-wheelers and four-wheelers. Only essential services, patients and passengers are allowed during the night curfew | VINOD KUMAR T

The BBMP on Saturday sanitised KP Agrahara police station on Magadi Road after two of police personnel there tested positive for Covid-19. This is the second police station in West Division where personnel tested positive

UGADI TRAVEL WORRIES EXPERTS

Say this may lead to massive spike in cases across districts, ask people to stay vigilant

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

THE long holiday season, including the weekend and Ugadi festival, could lead to a spike in Covid cases across districts with many people entering Karnataka from other states, said members of the Technical Advisory Committee.

Dr Giridhara R Babu, a senior epidemiologist and a member Covid-19's Technical Advisory Committee, said, "Due to inter-state travel, we will definitely see new cases coming to other districts. Bengaluru Urban has the highest number of cases in the state now, and there are many districts where the situation has been under control so far."

With increased travelling this weekend and the coming week, the cases would spike, health experts feared.

Dr Manjunath CN, member of TAC and Director, Jayadeva Institute of Cardiology, said people should not let their guard down at this crucial time when the next 10 days are important to decide the direction of the Covid second wave.

A health worker collects a sample from a young passenger for an RT-PCR test at Majestic Bus Terminal on Saturday | SHRIRAM BN

"We may reach the same or worse situation than we saw during the first wave if we don't contain the spread. If they can, people should avoid travelling. Otherwise, the healthcare system in all Tier 2 cities will be burdened and we may start struggling with non-availability of beds," he said.

Experts feared that the State Government may have to resort to weekend lockdowns, besides night curfew to prevent people from congregating. Despite several warnings and government order banning public celebrations, there is already a huge rush in markets across Karnataka, said the members.

"There is a rush to buy new clothes, flowers, fruits, ration etc for the festival. Several people can be seen thronging the malls, markets for Ugadi shopping. This will lead to a surge," warned a member of TAC.

"Several people from Bengaluru have travelled by trains because of non-availability of KSRTC buses to various districts in the state and also to other states. When they return from states, where the prevalence of Covid is high, we could see a spike here," explained another member.

HEART WRENCHING

33-yr-old Covid patient dies after being denied bed

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

A 33-year-old Covid patient died on Saturday morning despite frantic efforts by an emergency response team volunteer to save him.

Mohammed Ismail, a software engineer and Covid volunteer, went to three hospitals, looking for a bed for the patient from 6.30 pm on Friday till 1 am on Saturday. "I received a call around 6.15 pm from a hospital in Vasanthnagar saying that a patient admitted there has tested positive and needs to be admitted to a Covid-designated hospital," he said. He called 108 helpline and arranged for a bed at Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital in Vasanthnagar. But when he reached there with the patient, the bed was not available.

"The staff there was not even ready to check his vitals. The ambulance that was sent didn't have enough oxygen for the patient. We had to rush him to an NGO in Shivajinagar which provided an oxygen cylinder. After repeated requests to 108, we were told to wait and then given a bed at Mahaveer Jain Hospital in Girinagar," he said.

But by the time they reached Girinagar, the patient's oxygen saturation level had fallen to seven and there was no bed available even there. After repeated requests, the patient was admitted in the emergency room and provided oxygen, but the hospital refused admission. Around 1 am, the patient was shifted to Marvel Hospital in Kormangala, when his oxygen saturation level was 57. Unfortunately, the precious five hours spent looking for a bed proved too much for the patient, who died at 4 am on Saturday. As Covid cases continue to rise, patients are struggling to find beds in government and private hospitals in the city. Government hospitals ask the patients' kin to shift non-Covid patients immediately after test reports return positive.

Educationist and founder of Bengaluru Covid Helpline, Ameen E Muddassar, told *TNSE* that he got a call around 4 am from a person looking for a bed for his mother, who was admitted to a private hospital on Saturday around 4 pm due to cardiac issues. Though the treatment began around 10.30 pm, the patient tested positive and they were asked to shift her immediately to another hospital. "For six hours, we did not find a bed. The patient's son called many hospitals but not a single bed was available. It is unfortunate such things are happening. Now, people have to take Covid seriously," said Ameen.

The BBMP chief health officer has sent a show-cause notice to Mahaveer Jain Hospital, Vasanthnagar, seeking an explanation on why the patient was denied a bed in spite of blocking it through CHBMS. It said, "Since you have denied admission, which eventually led to death, you are hereby directed to give an explanation within 24 hours of receipt of this notice."

EXPRESS READ

Bosch sets up 50-bed CCC at Adugodi unit

Bengaluru: The Bosch industrial unit in Adugodi has set up a 50-bed Covid care centre and a vaccination site on its factory premises. While the vaccination site has been opened for the public, the CCC will open in another two-three days. BBMP Chief Commissioner Gaurav Gupta and other officials gave their approval to the facilities after an inspection on Saturday. "The zonal commissioners are surveying places in wards to set up CCCs. They are also checking if facilities that were earlier turned into CCCs can be reopened again," Gupta said. **ENS**

Tika Utsav to be held from April 11

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A Tika Utsav (vaccine festival) will be held from April 11- 14 to encourage more people to get the jab. To ensure that the utsav, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is a success, Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya and Revenue Minister R Ashoka set a target of 7.5 lakh vaccinations in 15 days in South Bengaluru for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and health officials.

At a meeting held in the city on Saturday, with BBMP and private hospital managements, Surya said extensive awareness campaigns will be held. He said that there were around 7.5 lakh voters above 45 years of age in South Zone, comprising six constituencies of Basavanagudi, Jayanagar, Vijaynagar, Padmanabhnagar, Chickpet and BTM Layout.

MP Tejasvi Surya and Revenue Minister R Ashoka attend a meeting, in Bengaluru on Saturday | EXPRESS

"We need to achieve the remaining target by vaccinating about 5.5 lakh people in the next 15 days. For this, we need to educate people. We need to create more awareness in slums," he said. Minister Ashoka directed the police to prevent large gatherings during the festive period.

BBMP officials said at present, around 35,000- 40,000 people are being vaccinated per day and they want to increase it to at least 75,000 per day as part of the utsav.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, **BABU.V.N.GOPI S/o.** Narayanan , residing at No.448, 2nd D Cross, MES Road , Muthyalanagar , Bangalore - 560054. I declare on oath that my names **GOPI NARAYANAN VALIYAPURACKAL , GOPI V.N** in old adhar No. 822832511082, **V.N BABU** in Pan Card No.ATFB6062P & Passport No.L-2713472 & **BABU V.N GOPI** in corrected aadhar belongs to me only & to non other . To be corrected as **BABU V.N GOPI** in my Pan Card & Passport accordingly. Vide Affidavit dated 09.04.2021 before Notary Chandrakala, Bangalore.

PUBLIC NOTICE

To whomsoever it may concern,
Our Clients namely Mr. Nawal Manuja, S/o. Mr. Vikram Manuja and his wife Mrs. Garima Singh Manuja, both residing at #101, Peace Ville, 9/1, Ahmed Sait Road, Frazer Town, Bangalore hereby confirm that the a 3 BHK Apartment Unit bearing No. A403, Fourth Floor, Block-1 in E-City Town Phase-I, measuring 1500 Sq.Ft which they intended to purchase under the Assignment Agreement dated 15.05.2017 executed between them and the previous Agreement Holder namely Mr. Ashfaq Rasheed Shaikh, S/o.Mr.Abdul Rasheed Shaikh which is acquired by him under Agreement of Sale dated 19.08.2013 can now be registered in the name of the new Buyer namely Mr. Nirupam Dutta, S/o. Nirmal Chandra Dutta and his wife Mrs. Shanti Chatri, residing at B458, GM Infinite E-City Town, Bangalore since our Clients have received all the Sale consideration under execution of Assignment Agreement dated 12.03.2021 in full from the new buyer and due to inability they are not able to be personally present in the Sub-Registrar office for signing the Sale Deed as Confirming parties. Our Clients hereby confirm that by virtue of an Affidavit and this Public Notice that the consent and confirmation of the Original Agreement Holder and our Clients are deemed accepted for the execution of the Sale Deed in favour of the new buyers in all respect and if any persons have any objection/claims over the same, they may come forward with their valid objections with supporting documents within 7 days from the date of this Notice / Publication, and in the absence of which it shall be construed that there are no objection/claims for the execution of the Sale Deed in favour of the new buyers herein in any manner.
JP & JP Law Firm,
#778, 36th Cross, 22nd Main, 4th T Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560041.
Mobile No. 7760414171
Bangalore 10.04.2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public in hereby informed that my client is intending to purchase the below mentioned schedule property from its owner **Sri M.KUMARA SWAMY, S/o. Sri M.N.Venkataramaraju,** No.136, 3rd Main, 3rd Cross, Dollars Layout, J.P.Nagar IV Phase, Bangalore-560 078.
Anybody having any objection, claim, interest, dispute or whatsoever for the intended sale transaction, he/she/they should contact the undersigned with the documentary proof substantiating his/her/their objections/ claim/ details of dispute/s or whatsoever within **(15) fifteen days** from the date of this publication, failing which, my client will proceed to complete the sale transaction with the above owner as if there are no third party claim/objections/disputes or whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property and thereafter no claim / objections/ disputes will be entertained.

SCHEDULE

All the piece and parcel of the converted land bearing **Sy.No.24,** present BBMP Khatha No.133/24, situated at **Begur Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bengaluru** measuring **1 acre** and bounded on the :
East by : Land belonging to Konikarappa Igneshappa, **West by :** Land belonging to B.D. Venkatesh, **North by :** 40 feet Road and thereafter land belonging to Hanumaiah Seshappa, **South By :** Land belonging to Pushpavathi.

M.R. RAJINI
Advocate and Property Laws Consultant
No.31, 1st 'A' Cross, Dorasanipalya, Bannerughatta Road, Behind Parimala Hospital, Bangalore – 560 076,
Contact : 9535982832

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, SBC O&M, Division, Bheemarayangudi, Tq: Shahapur, Dist: Yadagiri , State:Karnataka, Email ID:kbjnleesbc@gmail.com

No.KBJNL/SBC/DVN/TND/PB/2021-22/02 Date: 06/04/2021

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through e-procurement system)

The Executive Engineer, KBJNL, SBC O&M Division, Bheemarayangudi of Shahapur Taluka, Yadgir invites percentage tenders in two cover system from Registered Contractors KPWD Class-I & enrolled in KBJNL selected list of Category-III & above or the works as detailed in the table below.
1) Work details : Construction of RCC trough aqueduct at 24.800 Km of Dy-6 of SBC.(Indent No.20656), 2) Amount Put to tender : **Rs. 80.27 Lakhs,** 3) The contractor can have access to the electronic document, i.e Tender Schedules, bid documents and other documents in the website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in on payment of tender processing fee (non-refundable): **From 12.04.2021 From 11.00 Hrs.,** 4) The last date & time for submission of electronic documents through e-portal : **21.04.2021 upto 16.30 Hrs.,** 5) Date & time for opening of electronic document first (Technical bid) : **23.04.2021 @11.00 Hrs.,** 6) The electronic document second (financial bid) of pre-qualified contractor will opened on: **28.04.2021 or After approval of Technical bid.,** 7) For more information contact details: Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, SBC O&M Division, Bheemarayangudi of Shahapur Taluka, Yadgir., 8) Website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIP/Yadgiri/17/MC&A/2021-22 **KBJNL, SBC O&M Division Bheemarayanagudi.**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
DISTRICT URBAN DEVELOPMENT CELL, D.C. OFFICE
Chitradurga District, Chitradurga-577501
Telephone & Fax No: 08194-225713, E-Mail: dudc_ctg@yahoo.co.in

No. DUDC/NAGAROTHANA(MUNICIPALITY)-3/CR 102/2017-18 Date: 08.04.2021

RE - TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Deputy Commissioner, Chitradurga District invites tender in One cover system using KW-2 from Class-III Contractors and Two cover system using KW-4 Tender Document from call-II contractors for Nagarothana (Municipality)-3 Project in Chitradurga District Package works as detailed below:-

Sl. No	Description of work	Esimated Cost of the work value (Rs. in Lakhs	EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	Period of Construction (including Monsoon)
	Hiriyuru CMC			
1	Widening of Roads, Construction of Drain, Footpath and Road Divider Providing Street Light in Huliyar Main Road from Welcome Arch **INDENT NO: DMA/2020-21/RD/WORK_INDENT112144/ Call-2**	400.00	As per Govt. Order EMD Declaration Should be uploaded in E-Portal	12 Months
2	Construction of Library Building and Anganawadi Building in Ward No. 18 Near Filter House in Hiriyuru CMC **INDENT NO: DMA/2020-21/BD/WORK_INDENT 112142/ Call-2**	50.00	As per Govt. Order EMD Declaration Should be uploaded in E-Portal	6 Months
3	Providing and Laying 200 MM Diameter K-7 Class D1 Rasing Main and to Distribution Line Hope Pipe of Diameter 160 MM & 250 MM From Vadavathi First Grade Science College to Sri Gurusidda rameshwara Krupa in Huliyar Main Road in Hiriyur CMC **INDENT NO: DMA/2020-21/WS/WORK_INDENT 107840/ Call-2**	50.00	As per Govt. Order EMD Declaration Should be uploaded in E-Portal	6 Months

Interested contractors shall register on the e-procurement platform to participate in this tender. Contractors can download the tender documents from the e-Procurement platform **(www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in)**. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** EMD and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Calendar of Events and other information are as follows: 1) Pre Bid Meeting fo Bidders : **20.04.2021 at 11.00 AM. 2)** Last Date for uploading of completed tender documents : **10.05.2021 at 5.30 PM. 3)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids) : **12.05.2021 at 5.30 PM. 4)** The financial bid will be opened after the approval of the technical bid. Any changes in the tender conditions and Postponement of calender events (if-any) is only through e-Procurement portal and will not be published any news papers.

Sd/-
Deputy Commissioner,
DIPR/Chithrdurga/Shirdi Sai/30/2021-22 **Chitradurga District, Chitradurga**

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(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

All the tenders* issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCCL **www.bcclweb.in,** Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement Portal **https://eprocure.gov.in.** In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **https://gem.gov.in.**
*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

Best Emerging Technology Jobs in the World: How to Get them?

As the school year is about to come to an end, the graduating high school students are thinking of going to college while their parents are getting anxious about what their children should study, what college they should go to, and what would be job prospects in four or five years. Although there are many paths and options, they should know that engineering continues to offer some of the best job prospects and would remain so for a long time to come. The following questions and answers will help them get a better perspective on higher studies in emerging technologies and the job prospects in those areas.

What are the Emerging Technology Jobs?
Interdisciplinary engineering that combines computer technologies with one or more areas of engineering may very well be described as emerging technology areas. Global industry is expected to see substantial job growth in the next ten years in the following areas: Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Analytics, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Internet of Things, Robotics, Medical Devices and Systems, Biological Systems and Engineering, Autonomous Vehicles, Large Scale Engineering Systems, Precision Manufacturing, Global Supply Chain, Energy and Environment, Infrastructure and Transportation.

What are the Prospects of Employment for BTech Graduates in the Next Ten Years?
The job prospects are excellent for engineering graduates in the next ten years. Indian engineering graduates will have job opportunities in India as well as in the global market place, provided they possess strong technical skills, an ability to communicate in more than one global language, people skills to adapt and manage in diverse work environments, and a drive to excel.

Strong technical skills, preferably in two areas of technology will offer better prospects. The global demographics would also offer additional opportunities if an engineering graduate can communicate with English and another International language.

What should one do to get the skills for Emerging Technology Jobs?
Find a B.Tech degree program that emphasizes technical skills, engineering practice, hands-on experience and on the job training. Learn the concepts and apply them to real world projects. Practice like a Cricket player getting ready for a championship game every time. Avoid programs that prepare students for examinations.

Are there degree programs that would allow one to focus on Engineering application and practice?
There are many good programs in the country. A place like Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Engineering and Technology (SRET at SRIHER), Porur, Chennai offers unique opportunities to learn and apply engineering concepts and gain full-time work experience through 15 months of internship work in industry before getting a BTech degree.

What are the benefits of Internship? How can one work for 15 months before getting a BTech Degree?
Industry internship helps gain practical knowledge, work experience, and self confidence and leads directly to full-time employment. At Sri Ramachandra, the BTech students start their mandatory internship in industry in the first year and work up to four months every year for four years before graduation. They can also take international internship assignments. More than 35% of students get paid jobs, even during their first year of internship. Mandatory, 15 month internship is part of the BTech curriculum and it is unique in the country.

Advt.

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Mithai Mate 400g | ₹106*
Fresh Cream 1L | ₹197*
Whipping Cream 1L | ₹210*
*MRP (incl. of all taxes), Conditions apply.

Social Welfare and Muzrai Minister Kota Srinivas Poojary tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday. The minister tweeted about the same and asked those who came in contact with him recently to get tested

SUNDAY INTERVIEW

'BSY NEVER MISSES TARGET; AIMS TO GET 130+ SEATS IN 2023'

RAMU PATIL @Bengaluru

The big task for us is to convince people to vote for development and we are happy that we have succeeded in doing so. The BJP is confident of winning over the voters with our development agenda

B Y Vijayendra

AS electioneering for the bypolls gains momentum, the BJP is making all-out efforts to win the Maski and Basavakalayan Assembly segments and the Belagavi Lok Sabha seat. Expressing confidence of doing well in the bypolls, BJP state vice-president and Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's son **B Y Vijayendra** says the next big challenge for the party is to come back to power after the 2023 Assembly elections with an absolute majority. "Yediyurappa aims to get around 130 seats for the party in the next elections. He will not sit quietly and continue to work till he reaches that target," he told *The New Sunday Express*.

After KR Pet and Sira, you are now in Maski. What are the challenges for the party there?
The situation in the constituency has changed since last week. The Congress, which was under the impression that it already had won the seat, is now saying that it is difficult to do so. That is what Congress leaders in the constituency are talking about. Prathap Gowda Patil (BJP candidate) had won the seat three times and the Congress had managed to create some negative impression about him.

The big task for us is to convince people to vote for development and we are happy that we have succeeded in doing so. The BJP is confident of winning over the voters with our development agenda. They will support us.

The Congress accused the BJP of distributing money and urged the Election Commission to disqualify your party candidate.
If they have any evidence, let them give it (to the EC). But the reality is different. They are losing ground and making baseless allegations out of desperation. They are worried as they have lost KR Pet, Sira and are now losing Maski.

Some sections of BJP leaders say Vijayendra gets undue credit for party candidates' victories. How do you respond?
The credit should always go to our party leaders and our workers. Our party workers are the ones who work at the ground level. The credit for winning any election should go to them.

Some leaders in your party, as well as in the Opposition, accuse you of working as a de facto CM and interfering in government works.
I am fully aware of the circumstances under which Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and the (Sangh) Parivar leaders brought Yediyurappa back into the BJP, made him party president and also the CM. So, there is no question of causing any damage to the party, central leaders and Yediyurappa by my conduct or behaviour. That question will not arise at all. My dream is to work for the party. But there is no question of me interfering in the working of ministers. It is easy to make allegations against me, as I am the CM's son, and also there is nothing to speak against the CM. There are so many senior ministers in the government, where is the question of my interference?

As vice-president of the BJP state unit, do you think your party MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal's continuing tirade and K S Eshwarappa's letter to the Governor, undermine Yediyurappa's leadership?
In 1999, when Yediyurappa lost the election, his opponents thought that was the end of his political career. Again, in 2006, when H D Kumaraswamy refused to transfer power, many thought that it was the end of the road for Yediyurappa. Even in 2013, many thought his time in politics was over. Yediyurappa is not an individual, but a force. The people of the state as well as the central leaders are confident about that force. So, some people here and there making comments will not weaken Yediyurappa or his leadership.

How important are these bypolls to Yediyurappa and the party?
The BJP takes all elections as a challenge. Winning or losing these elections may not make much of a difference for the BJP, but it is very important for the development of the constituencies and people will support us.

After the bypolls,will you be focusing more on the Old Mysuru region?
As a vice-president, I will focus on the entire state and there is a lot of scope for strengthening the party in the Kalyana Karnataka and Old Mysuru regions. It is a big challenge for the party in both these regions. I will continue to work for strengthening the party along with other leaders and give more emphasis on the Old Mysuru region.

Former CM Siddaramaiah has dared you to contest from Varuna constituency in the next Assembly elections. How do you respond?
Such challenges are not new to us. We have our workers and the organisation to face any challenge. But, the decision on when and from where to contest elections will be decided by our central and state leaders and I will abide by that.

What is the next big challenge the BJP in Karnataka?
Though we are in power today, the next big challenge is to come back to power with an absolute majority. Yediyurappa aims to get around 130 seats for the party in the next elections. He has never missed his target, even during the Lok Sabha elections or during the byelections. Many of his detractors talk about his age, but at every stage, he has proved what he is capable of. He aims to win 130 seats. He will not sit quietly and will continue to work till he reaches that target.

People, who had hoped to take buses to their hometowns, leave the KSRTC Bus Stand at Majestic, Bengaluru, as vehicles continue to stay off the road on Saturday | SHRIRAM BN

Transport dept picks housing to target kin of striking employees

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

AS the transport corporation employees' strike entered the fourth day, family members of employees taking part in the agitation got a jolt with the transport department sending them notices reminding them of the conditions for allocating them staff quarters.

The government chose to tell the kin of employees that the staff quarters are given to them under the terms that the employees are available for duty when required, failing which action can be taken against them. This is the first time that the relatives of transport employees have got such notices.

A transport official told *TNSE*, "The families of employees are misreading the notice. Nowhere does it say the services of employees would be terminated, though under ESMA and Labour Commissioner's ban on strike, it can be done. It only states that action could be taken, which may be disciplinary or transfer. As we are trying to get employees back to work and family members are not cooperating, we were left with no other option."

Members of striking unions said the notices are a pressure tactic to break the agitation. "But it will not work and the strike will continue," they asserted.

Deputy Chief Minister and Transport Minister Laxman Savadi alleged that Opposition party leaders are instigating the employees. "Several rounds of talks have been held. The employees should not forget that at a time when many did not get salaries, the government released over Rs 2,000 crore for salaries. Many are keen to return to work, but they are being threatened by some misguided and politically-motivated unions. They should realise that if buses don't run, there will be no revenue and it will be difficult to pay their salaries."

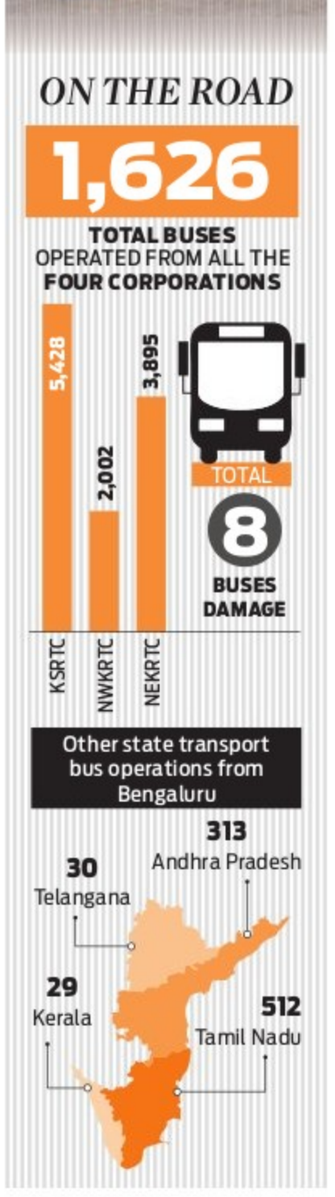
Family members of agitators said, "The MLAs, MPs and other politicians should forgo their monthly salaries and other earnings and see how difficult it gets. We have no money to buy ration or medicines."

The strike hit the people planning to travel to their hometowns during the weekend for Ugadi. Many missed their buses as BMTC vehicles too are off the road and travellers could not make it to KSRTC bus-stands, from where the transport department has made alternative arrangements. KSRTC officials said the ticket fares of those who had prebooked will be fully refunded.

The Transport Department said FIRs have been filed against 20 employees for harassing those returning to duty, while cybercrime cases have been booked against many others.

As a disciplinary action, KSRTC transferred 73 drivers and conductors, four traffic supervisory staff and 11 mechanical staff. The BMTC dismissed 60 trainees and 58 probationary staffers.

The officials said private bus operators are complaining that they are not getting enough passengers leading to losses.



Kodihalli held, freed in Belagavi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Belagavi

THE police took farmer leader and honorary president of KSRTC employees' union Kodihalli Chandrashekhar into custody on Saturday and later released him.

The police said that he had organised farmers and KSRTC employees meeting at Suvarna Garden near Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi on Saturday. Though permission was not given, he went ahead with the meeting with farmers and KSRTC employees to discuss transport employees problems, rising fertiliser prices and supporting the Delhi farmers' protest against farm bills.

The police personnel took him into custody from his room in a hotel near Rani Channama Circle and released him out of the Belagavi Lok Sabha constituency boundary limits.

Earlier, he said, "The government's methods to suppress agitations is not right. Is this government in a hurry to privatise the public transport system by terminating the employees?"

Taking part in the agitation of transport employees here on Saturday, he said, "People are suffering because bus services have stopped. The government should take a quick decision with the concern of employees in mind. The government should solve problems, instead of creating them."

He said, 'The continuation of the strike depends on the decision of the government. Transport Minister Laxman Savadi had earlier agreed to solve employees' problems, but did not honour the commitment. The government is now trying to beat down the employees. The government is meting out step-motherly treatment to transport employees."

Police personnel take farmer leader Kodihalli Chandrashekhar into custody in Belagavi on Saturday | EXPRESS

Oppn slams govt on night curfew, transport strike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

OPPOSITION Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) slammed the State Government for imposing night curfew to contain the spread of Covid and pointed at its "failure" to resolve the ongoing statewide strike by transport corporation employees.

"The government should not be adamant, but make efforts to convince the employees to return to work. It is the government's responsibility to take them into confidence and put an end to the inconvenience caused to people," said JDS leader and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and ministers should invite the employees for talks to resolve the issue, he suggested.

Transport corporations employees have launched an indefinite strike from April 7 demanding pay on par with the 6th Pay Commission recommendation. The government has rejected the demand, but agreed to give an 8 per cent salary hike to them.

Opposition leader and former chief minister Siddaramaiah questioned the government's decision to impose a night curfew from Saturday.

If the Chief Minister really wants to contain the Covid spread, he must ensure strict enforcement of precautionary measures, increase testing and provide treatment to those who tested positive, he added.

K'taka govt tops in maladministration: Surjewala

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Belagavi

TERMING the B S Yediyurappa dispensation in the state an illegitimate government born out of murdering democracy and the mandate of the people, AICC General Secretary and incharge of state Congress, Randeepsingh Surjewala, on Saturday said that in the entire country, the Karnataka government tops in maladministration, corruption and malgovernance.

Addressing joint press conference with senior Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, D K Shivakumar and M B Patil, Surjewala said that the upcoming bypolls will change the direction of politics in the state as the country waits for a change of guard in Karnataka.

Expressing serious concern over the letter written recently by RDPR Minister K S Eshwarappa to Governor Vajubhai Vala, he said, "Either the minister or chief minister should have been expelled. One or both are culprits here. The BJP central leadership has remained quiet on this issue."

He hit out at the BJP leadership over the tirade of Vijayapura MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal against the Chief Minister, saying a former Union Minister has raised objections to the involvement of Yediyurappa's family in the affairs of the government.

Questioning the working of the Home Department in the state under Basavaraj Bommai, Surjewala said the same department headed by M B Patil had functioned professionally. He criticised the State Government for doing injustice to various communities like Lingayats Panchamsalis, Kurubas, Valmikis, in responding to their demands for reservation.

Objecting to the arrest of labour union leaders in the state over the ongoing KSRTC employees' agitation, he wanted to know why the chief minister did not increase the salaries of the staff as recommended by the 6th Pay Commission.

Congress leader Siddaramaiah with Bishop of Belagavi Derek Fernandes and others ahead of the bypolls in Belagavi on Saturday | EXPRESS

Not Cong, but BSY in sinking boat, says Siddu

Belagavi: Reacting to Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's comment that "Congress is sinking boat", Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah retorted that it is not the Congress, but the CM, who is rowing a sinking boat, and MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal is proof of this. "Yatnal is a senior BJP leader. What is he saying? When you hear his comments, don't you feel that Yeddiyurappa's boat is sinking?" he said. ENS

Allow candidates to file papers on govt holiday: DKS

Bengaluru: KPCC president D K Shivakumar has written to the State Election Commission, requesting it to allow candidates contesting the urban local body and town municipal council elections this month to file their nominations on government holidays too. The last date for filing of nomination is on Thursday (April 15). However, there are government holidays on Tuesday for Ugadi and Wednesday for Ambedkar Jayanthi, he wrote. ENS

WONDER MILLET

Humble ragi back in demand, production doubles in two years

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

RAGI that had taken a backseat in urban areas is back in demand. In just two years, the area covered under the millet in the state has increased and production has doubled. With the State Government planning to introduce ragi under the Public Distribution System from May this year, the demand is expected to increase further.

In the state, Ragi is grown in Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chikkaballapur, Chitradurga, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Kolar, Mandya, Ramanagara, Tumkur, Ballari and Davangere districts. In 2018-19, ragi was sown in 5.55 lakh hectares, in 2019-20, it was in 6.74 lakh hectares and last year, it increased to 7.08 lakh hectares. The production, which was 6.78 lakh tonnes in 2018-19 shot up to 11 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 and this year, it is close to 13 lakh tonnes.

Ragi being harvested near Bengaluru

Sources in the state agriculture department said there has been an increase in demand for ragi over the last few years. The pandemic came as a blessing last year with many people from cities returning to their hometowns in rural areas. The majority of them went back to farming, increasing the area under cultivation. Good rains this year too boosted the production.

Food and Civil Supplies Minister Umesh Katti told *The New Sunday Express* that they were planning to distribute ragi to PDS beneficiaries from April, but had to delay it because of the by-elections. "Starting May, we will distribute 3 kg ragi and 2 kg rice per person in the Old Mysuru region, where ragi is a staple. For this, we need 6.5 lakh tonnes per year. We have got the Union Government's approval for the scheme," he said.

There demand for this healthy millet in the international market too. Prof M B Rajegowda, an Agrometeorologist, who was earlier with the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), said ragi is sold for $1.25 to $1.5 per kilo in the United States, which comes to around Rs 100 per kilo. But in Karnataka, it is sold for Rs 30 to Rs 35 per kilo. The State Government is helping farmers with quality testing, allowing its increased export. "People have realised the value of ragi and there is a potential for its sales to grow," he added.

DUO BOOKED FOR FAKING SWAB TESTS

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

WHILE the Karnataka Government is continuously setting testing targets to public health centres, two employees of a PHC in Kodigehalli were caught on video faking RTPCR Covid swab samples. After the video went viral, BBMP suspended the Chief Medical Officer of the PHC and also filed a police case against the duo.

One of the culprits, Nagaraj was working at a private hospital and had lost job during the lockdown. He was trained to be a swab collector and appointed at Kodigehalli PHC on a contract basis. In the video, Nagaraj and Hemanth are seen opening the test kits and the buds to collect the samples and marking them as tests being done. The accused were said to be aware of the video being shot, allegedly by ASHA workers Kusuma, Prema and Padma.

A video grab shows the two suspects taking swabs out of the kits | EXPRESS

Dr Premanand B R, Chief Medical Officer of the PHC who has since been suspended, filed the complaint at Kodigehalli police station. His complaint stated, "The duo were hired on a contract basis and were working as Covid19 employees for the last 10 months. We saw the video of the duo faking the swab tests and entering it as tests done on patients. They have done this when I wasn't present in the hospital."

A senior police officer said, "The duo have not just cheated the government but also committed a breach of criminal trust by falsifying information. We have booked them under Sections 177 and 408 of IPC."

Health Commissioner Dr K V Thrilok Chandra said the BBMP is conducting an investigation on all the other swabs collected at the PHC. "We will also conduct surprise raids and visit other PHCs," he added. The PHC had a testing target of 650 samples a day. Recently, 12 samples from the centre were neither positive nor negative for Covid.

Want library to be a public facility: Isaaq

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SPEAKING to TNSE, Misbah said books that were burned were treasure troves which had been of help to many in the neighbourhood. Isaaq's commitment, who worked odd jobs to maintain the library, had prompted her to start the fundraiser, she said.

A similar campaign on Milaap fetched another ₹1 lakh for the cause. Former minister and Chamarajpet MLA B Z Zameer Ahmed also extended help by handing over ₹2 lakh through his supporters in Mysuru.

Help also came in the form of books, after academician Muzaffar Assadi appealed to people through a social media post to donate one book each to rebuild Isaaq's library. Similarly, a few publications from Bengaluru also announced that they will provide books while Karnataka Rakshana Vedike members, who met Isaaq in Mysuru, handed over copies of Indian Constitution, Bhagavad Gita, Quran and Bible to him.

Overwhelmed by the response, Isaaq said that come what may, the library should come up at the same spot. "People from this neighbourhood are deprived of such facilities. I want them to read and learn, especially Kannada. I do not want my name on the library, let it be a public facility," he said.

Meanwhile, the city police have formed a special team to nab the miscreants.

Complete portions for SSLC, PUC boards by April 20: Minister

Deputy Chief Minister Dr CN Ashwanth Narayan presents a gold medal to 70-year-old Anasuya during the eighth convocation of Karnataka Sanskrit Unversity in Bengaluru on Saturday | VINOD KUMAR T

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

ALLAYING all fears over board exams amidst the second wave of Covid-19, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar maintained that all measures were being taken in the state for the smooth conduct of SSLC and PUC examinations.

Chairing a meet with officials of the education department here on Saturday, Kumar made it clear that exams will be conducted as planned, adhering to guidelines put in place by the state government. PUC exams are slated to begin from May 24, while SSLC exams will start from June 21. Accordingly, the minister asked officials to ensure that the portions are completed by April 20, so that students get ample time for revision.

"It is the responsibility of concerned school authorities to maintain hygiene on their campuses by regularly sanitising classrooms. There should be no compromise on safety measures," he said, appealing to teachers to pay extra attention towards improving the results of their schools.

The Primary and Secondary Education Minister also asked teachers to ensure physical distancing among students at schools.

Senior officials of the education department were present.

K-SET examination postponed

Karnataka State Eligibility Test (K-SET), considered to be a gate examination to enter the teaching profession in higher education, which was slated to be held on April 11 has been postponed. The K-SET examination coordinator, H Rajashekar, said the exam dates will be announced on the official website, and students are appealed to follow the website for further details. The University of Mysore (UoM) is the nodal agency authorised by the UGC to conduct the exam. UoM registrar Prof Shivappa said the ongoing KSRTC strike is one of the main reasons behind the postponement.

No summer vacation, says Deputy CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

DEPUTY Chief Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan on Saturday announced that the ongoing examinations for higher education courses will not be stopped, and all activities will take place as per schedule. Also, summer vacations will be cancelled for the year.

Talking to mediapersons at the eighth convocation of the Sanskrit University, Dr Ashwath Narayan said that at the university level, under-graduate, post-graduate, engineering, diploma and all department examinations that come under the state education department will be held without any change. For the upcoming academic year 2021-22 too, there will be no change in the academic activities. After the examinations, there will be no summer vacation and classes will begin early. The next academic year will have both offline and online classes and will start with online classes, but attendance will be compulsory.

Meanwhile, due to Covid-19, the Learning Management System has been implemented and 1.6 lakh students in government colleges will receive free tabs. "Students can learn from anywhere. The previous year, 1.1 lakh students were given tabs," he added.

TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Regd. Office: 11th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Ganapatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai – 400013. CIN No. U67190MH2008PLC187552
Contact Add: No 82/1, Ground Floor, Krishna Towers, Bengaluru 560025. Mob: 9900880727

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)
(As per Rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the TATA Capital Housing Finance Limited., under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated as below calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.
The borrower, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules.
The borrower, in particular, and the public in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the TATA Capital Housing Finance Limited, for an amount referred to below along with interest thereon and penal interest, charges, costs etc. from date of demand notice.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Loan Account No.	Name of Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/Legal Representative(s):	Amount & Date of Demand Notice	Date of Physical Possession
9853483	M/s. Koromandal Refractories Pvt Ltd, (Borrower) Mr. Chandrakant Shah and Mr.Karan C Shah (Co-borrower's)	Rs.3,64,23,989/- As on 24st September, 2020	08th April, 2021

Description of Secured Assets/Immovable Properties: SCHEDULE - A: Item No.1: All the piece and parcel of the property of Factory Building bearing Plot No.19, Measuring 1772.00 sq.mtrs, situated at Tarihal village, Industrial Estate, Hubli formed in R.S. No.87/2B. In the above said property there is an factory shed measuring 772 sq.feet having asbestos roof, mud wall with mud floor and remaining is open space. The said shed is constructed in bricks and having cement sheet roofing. The shed is of 13 years old having water, electricity facility. Bounded as follows:- East by: Bore well and Plot No.18(B), West by : Plot No.20, North by: KIADB Road, South by: Private land
Item No.2: All the pice and parcel of the property of bearing No.20, Tarhal Village, Industrial Area situated in Sy.No.87/2B Of Tariahal Hubli, hubli Taluk, Dharwad District, containing by admeasurement 1876.00 sq. mtrs. Bounded as follows:- East by: Plot No.19, West by: Plot No.21, North by: KIADB Road, South by: Private land.

Date: 08 April, 2021, Place: Bangalore
Sd/- Authorized Officer, Tata Capital Housing Finance Ltd.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(Works)
E-TENDER NOTICE
Sub: Tender Notice No. 01-DY.CE-WS-PER-2021-22-OT, Dt.17.05.2021
Tender Notice No. 02-DY.CE-WS-PER-2021-22-OT, Dt.17.05.2021
Tender Notice No. 03-DY.CE-WS-PER-2021-22-OT, Dt.17.05.2021

For and on behalf of the President of India, the DY.CE/WS/PER, southern railway, Chennai - 600023 invites e-tender for the following works as per notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderers / contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal www.ireps.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted. The cost of the tender form and the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) should be made through online payment gateway available in the website by the way of multiple banks' net-banking, debit card and credit card.

Name of the work

01. CW/PER - Replacement of corroded steel staging with new steel staging along with foundation for high level tanks in paint shop, LBR shop and provision for height gauge of wheel shop, CR shop, Old wagon repair shop and TLD at CW/PER.

02. LW/PER - Prioritization of Environmental Related Work (ERW) Construction of Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) System at LW/PER.

03. CW/PER - Re-Construction of Substation building 5 & 7 in view of safety at CW/PER.

	Approximate cash Value (Rupees)	EMD (Rupees)	Cost of Tender Form (Rupees)	Period of Completion in month(s)	Closing/ Opening Date @ 14.30hrs/ 14.30
Tender No	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
01	12920116.41	0.00	5600.00	6	17.05.2021
02	12494791.12	0.00	5600.00	6	17.05.2021
03	9929553.56	0.00	5600.00	6	17.05.2021

For further details refer to website portal www.ireps.gov.in or contact office of the DY.Chief Engineer/Work Shops/Perambur, Chennai- 600023.

DY-Chief Engineer/Work Shops / Perambur, Chennai - 600023.

Follow us on: twitter.com/GMSRailway

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank (A Government Of India Undertaking)
Branch: Malleshwaram 18th Cross (DP CODE: 10424) No.64 & 215, Margosa Road, 18th cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560055 PHONE: 080 23346605, Email: cb10424@canarabank.com

DEMAND NOTICE
NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

'We, **Canara Bank Malleshwaram 18th Cross (DP CODE: 10424)** had issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Security Interest Act 2002 by Registered Post with Acknowledgment Due (RPAD) to the addresses furnished to the Bank as mentioned below. Since the notice has not been acknowledged and notice could not be served. Further, Bank had served the said demand notices by affixture at the addresses given. The contents of the said notices are mentioned herein below.

1) Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantor :
1) Ramesh L S/o Late Lakkappa, #21, 4th main, 8th Cross, Malleshwaram Bangalore, Karnataka-560003, Surety: **1) Y.N. Manjula** W/o L Ramesh, #21, 4th main, 8th Cross, Malleshwaram Bangalore, Karnataka-560003.
[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Nature of Facility/ Account No	Limit	Out Standing Liability	NPA Date
04247790000632	Rs. 16,00,000/-	5,56,516.15	30.03.2021

Total Liability Amount: Rs.5,56,516.15 (Rupees Five Lakhs Fifty Six Thousand Five Hundred Sixteen and Paisa Fifteen Only) is due along with interest from 01.04.2021 and costs etc. **Demand Notice Dated : 03.04.2021**
Description Movable Property: Four Wheeler Toyoto Innova 2.5Z, Chasis No. MBJ11JV4007507480, Registration No. KA 04 MP5456 owned by Ramesh L

2) Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantor :
1) Neetha S.M, W/o Mr. Srikanth, S No. 36(8), 4th Cross, RK Layout, Malagala Main Road, Nagarabhavi 2nd Stage, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560091
[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Nature of Facility/ Account No	Limit	Out Standing Liability	NPA Date
04249790000213	Rs. 2,79,000	25,02,180.84	30.03.2021

Total Liability Amount: Rs.25,02,180.84 (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs Two Thousand One Hundred Eighty and Paisa Eighty Four Only) is due along with interest from 01.04.2021 and costs etc. **Demand Notice Dated : 03.04.2021**
Description Movable Property: Four Wheeler Auto Chasis No. MBJAA3GS9005293361117 Registration No. KA 05 MX 5055 owned by Neetha S M

3) Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantor :
1) Gaviyappa C S/o Chunchaiah, 706, 3rd Main, 3rd Cross, Kamalanagara, Bangalore, Karnataka-560079
[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Nature of Facility/ Account No	Limit	Out Standing Liability	NPA Date
04249910000114	Rs. 11,80,000/-	7,43,470.78	30.03.2021

Total Liability Amount: Rs.7,43,470.78 (Rupees Seven Lakhs Forty Three Thousand Four Hundred Seventy and Paisa Seventy Eight Only) is due along with interest from **01.04.2021** and costs etc. **Demand Notice Dated : 03.04.2021**
Description Movable Property: Force Motors Tempo Traveler Chasis No. MC1E4CFA3HP046030, Registration No. KA 02 AG 1558 owned by Gaviyappa C

You are here by called upon to pay **Canara Bank,** within a period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, the respective amount mentioned here above, failing which **Canara Bank** will take necessary action under the provisions of the said Act, against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the Borrowers and the Guarantors. The powers available to **Canara Bank** under the Act include (i) power to take possession of the secured assets of the Borrower / Guarantors / Mortgager including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realising secured assets and any transfer of secured assets by **Canara Bank** shall vest in the transferee rights in or in relation to, the secured asset transferred as if the transfer has been made by you. In terms of the provisions of section 13(13) of the said Act, you are hereby prohibited from transferring, either by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of your business), any of the secured assets as referred to in the Demand Notice affixed and also Hypothecated / Mortgaged to the bank without prior written consent of the Bank. The notice is issued in terms of Section (13)2 of the said Act.

Date : 10.04.2021 Place : Bangalore
Sd/- Authorised Officer Canara Bank

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY, e-Tender Notice
Tender No : 01/2021-22/KWA/PHC/D2/TVM. State plan 2016-17- water treatment plant at Neyyar Dam and allied works-Construction, trial running, commissioning and maintenance of 120 mld Water treatment plant with Plate settler technology (lamella), construction, commissioning and maintenance of floating intake structure, Supplying and laying 1422mm MS Raw Water Pumping Main, Supplying, erection, testing and commissioning of submerged centrifugal pump set, Supplying and erection of Transformers, construction of Substation Building, Installation of SCADA system for functioning of entire WTP components and allied works with full automation as per the design attached including trial running and commissioning of WTP and all allied works. EMD : Rs. 500000. Tender fee : Rs. 15000. Last Date for submitting Tender : 07-05-2021 03:00:pm. Phone : 0471-2322303. Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.
KWA-JB-GL-6-1163-2020-21 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Thiruvananthapuram

FORM NO. NCLT 3A
Advertisement detailing petition
[see rule 35]
IN THE MATTER OF SECTIONS 230 TO 232 OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF AMALGAMATION OF SPML INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED (TRANSFEREE COMPANY/APPLICANT 1) AND DOON VALLEY WASTE MANAGEMENT PRIVATE LIMITED (TRANSFEROR COMPANY/APPLICANT-2) AND THEIR RESPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS COMPANY APPLICATION NO. 22/BB/2021

Notice of Petition
A joint application under Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013, for Amalgamation of SPML INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED (Transferee Company/Applicant 1) and DOON VALLEY WASTE MANAGEMENT PRIVATE LIMITED (Transferor Company/Applicant-2) (collectively the "Joint Applicants") and their Respective Shareholders was presented by CS Rahul Aggarwal, Practicing Company Secretary and Counsel for the Joint Applicants on the 7th day of April 2021, and the said application is fixed for hearing before Hon'ble Bengaluru bench of National Company Law Tribunal on 5th day of May 2021 to consider dispensing meeting of (i) Equity Shareholders of Transferee Company / Applicant No. 1; (ii) Equity Shareholders of Transferor Company / Applicant No. 2; (iii) Preference shareholders of Transferor Company / Applicant No. 2; (iv) Creditors of Transferee Company / Applicant No. 1; and (v) Creditors of Transferor Company / Applicant No. 2.

Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said application should send to the Joint Applicant's Counsel, notice of his intention, signed by him or his Advocate, with his name and address, so as to reach the Joint Applicant's Counsel not later than three days before the date fixed for the hearing of the application.

Where he seeks to oppose the application, the grounds of opposition or a copy of his affidavit shall be furnished with such notice. A copy of the application will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges for the same.

Dated 09.04.2021
(Sd/-) CS Rahul Aggarwal
(Counsel for Joint Applicants)
Address: D-1201, Salarpuria Melody, Nayandahalli, Mysore Road, Bangalore-560039.
Email ID: rahul@csra.in
Phone No.: 9844320530

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is represented by the undersigned that Sridhar N.S. Partner, M/s. NSR PROJECTS, R/at. No.215/D, 18th Main, 19th Cross, SMS Layout, J.P.Nagar, 5th Phase, Bangalore-78, has lost/ misplaced the Original and Duplicate Partition Deed dated 19-04-2011, entered between Vajrappa and Hanumanthaih, registered as Doc. No. JPN-1-0447-2011-12, Stored in CD No. JPND106, in the Office of Senior Sub-Registrar office, J.P.Nagara, Bangalore.
It is further represented by the Undersigned that a Police Complaint regarding the loss/ misplaced above Original and Duplicate document have been lodged on 08.04.2021 through online and that Sridhar N.S. Partner, M/s. NSR PROJECTS, have not pledged the above Original and Duplicate document as security to any loans/borrowings.
Any person in possession of the said document or having any claim to the same may represent in this regard to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of this notice and if anybody illegally possess or misuse the said document the same will attract criminal act and it is warn to the general public not to deal with the said document with anybody and if anybody act or use of transact on the aforesaid document the owner is not held responsible for the said transaction.
Dt: 10-04-2021
Sd/- Mahesh Kumar M.H. Advocate
No.31, 5th Cross, 23th Main, J. P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78, Ph: 9686751274

PUBLIC NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF THE 25TH A.C.M.M AT BANGALORE
C.C. 10365/2010
BETWEEN:
Blitz Hotels & Resorts Pvt Ltd. Complainant
And
Paramount Construction Company And Others Accused
Notice / Summons to Accused No.3
Nasrulla Sheriff, Partner, Paramount Construction Company, No.269, 14th Cross, C.M.H. Road, Indiranagar, Bangalore - 560038.

NOTICE
WHEREAS the Complainant has filed a Complaint against you and other Accused, seeking the relief of take cognizance, try the accused and award cost. You are hereby summoned to appear in this Court in person, or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the Case, or who shall be accompanied by some person able to answer all such questions, on the day of 15.05.2021 at 11.00 o'clock to answer the claim, and you are directed to produce on that day all the documents upon which you intend to relay in support of your defence.
Take notice that, in default of your appearance, on the day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this Day of 6th April 2021.
By the order of the court
Registrar
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at Bangalore

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that my client has agreed to purchase the Schedule property from Mr. P.T. Rajagopalan, S/o late P.R.Thirunarayanachari, residing at No.C3/504, L & T South City Apartments, Arekere, Mico Lay-Out, Bangalore-560076. If anybody has got any legitimate claim over the same they can put forward their claim within **10 days** from the date of publication of this Notice along with relevant documents to the under signed. Claims that are received after ten days from the date of publication of this notice will not be taken into consideration.

SCHEDULE
All that piece and parcel of the Site No.66, situated in the layout formed by the Kethamaranahalli House Building Co-operative Society Limited, Bangalore-560003, at Saneguruvanahalli Village, Yeshwanthapur Hobli, Bangalore North taluk, Bangalore District, presently under the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mhanagara Palike Ward No.101 (Old Ward No.18). Property bearing Municipal No.66, situated at Sharadha Colony, IIIrd stage, IVth Block, Basaweshwaranagar, Bangalore-560079, having PID No.18-2-66 and bounded on:
East by :: 30 feet Road West by :: Site No.64 and 68
North by :: Site No.65A South by :: Site Nos.67
And measuring East to West: (67-0+72-0)/2 Feet (east to west on the northern side 72 feet and east to west on the southern side 67 feet) and North to South: (42-0 + 41-0)/2 Feet, (north to south on the eastern side 42 feet and north to south on the western side 41 feet) totally 320.47 Square Yards.
Bangalore, Dated: 07.04.2021
DIVAKAR BAL, LLB, ADVOCATE
70, 15th Cross, 6thd Main, J.C.Nagar, Mahalakshmi Lay-out, Bangalore-560086. Ph : 9845309404

भारत सरकार / Government of India
परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग / Department of Atomic Energy
नाभिकीय ईंधन सम्मिश्र / Nuclear Fuel Complex
इसीआईएल डाक, हैदराबाद / E.C.I.L. Post, Hyderabad- 500062
ई–निविदा आमंत्रण हेतु सूचना NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
निविदा सूचना संख्या Tender Notice No.: NFC/IR_W/IOA/2021

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, ऑनलाइन ई–टेंडर(एकल लिफाफा प्रणाली) के माध्यम से पात्र ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु निविदाएँ आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। On behalf of President of India, online e-tender (single envelope system) are invited from the eligible contractors for the following work.

कार्य का नाम Name of Work	Providing Necessary Support Service in Office Activities in NFC
अनुमानित लागत Estimated Cost	Rs. 81,44,443/- (Rupees Eighty One Lakhs Forty Four Thousand Four Hundred and Forty Three Only)
ठेके की अवधि Duration of Contract	12 Months from the date of issue of Work Order
निःशुल्क देखने और ई–निविदा को डाऊनलोड करने की अवधि Period for free view and downloading of e-tender	From 12-04-2021 to 26-04-2021 (21:00 Hrs.) on website www.tenderwizard.com/DAE.
बोली की ऑनलाइन प्रस्तुत करने की देय तिथि Due date for online submission of bids	28-04-2021 (21:00 Hrs.)
हार्ड प्रतियों को प्रस्तुत करने की देय तिथि Due date for submission of hard copies	On or before 14:00 Hrs. of 03-05-2021.
बोली खोलने की तिथि Date of opening of bid	15:00 Hrs. of 03-05-2021.

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए, कृपया www.tenderwizard.com/DAE. वेबसाइट पर जाएं। निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना www.nfc.gov.in पर भी केवल देखने हेतु उपलब्ध है।
For further details, please visit website www.tenderwizard.com/DAE. NIT is also available on website www.nfc.gov.in for viewing only.

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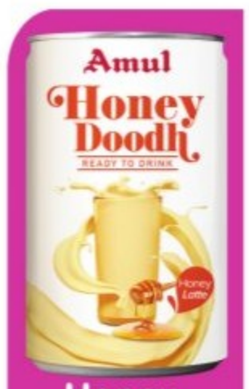
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Lychee 180mL | ₹ 10*

Cafe 500mL | ₹ 60*
Visit your nearest Amul Parlour for our entire range of exciting products.

*MRP (incl. of all taxes), Conditions apply.

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORY
Pangei.

e-TENDER NOTICE

No. 31/10/88-FSL(Mod)/ Pangei, the 8th April. 2021.

Bids are invited for supply of various equipment for FSL, Manipur. Bid form & other details can be obtained from **http://manipurtenders.gov.in.**

Sd/- **Director**
Forensic Science Laboratory
Manipur

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ATIF ALI SIDDIQUI,** aged about 39 years, R/at #A283, F Block, GM Infinity, E-City, Thirupalya, Neo Town Road, Electronic City, Bangalore-560100, hereby declare that my Daughter's actual name is **AYRA FATIMA** as per her School document but her pass port the name has been mentioned as **AYRA ATIF ALI**, hereafter she be known and called **AYRA FATIMA**, vide affidavit dated 10.04.2021, sworn before Advocate & Notary **B.M. CHANDRASHEKAR**, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **CHANNABASAVAIAH H.V.,** S/o. Virupakshaiah, Aged about 28 years, R/at No. 118, 3rd Main Cross, GKW Layout, Peenya 2nd Stage, Bengaluru - 560 058, have changed my name from **CHANNABASAVAIAH H.V.** to **CHETHAN V.** pursuant to the judgement and Decree dated 05/03/2021, in OS No. 2444/2019 passed by Sreepada N., XXXI ADDL. City Civil & Sessions Judge (CCH-14), Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I,**ANJANAYA.B.S** S/o. Siddalingappa , I am changing my name to **ANJU AARON.S.** resident No.13/A, Hulagalakunte, Uduvalli , Hiriyur, Chitradurga , Karnataka - 577598 Vide Affidavit dated. 22.03.2021 before Notary Chandrakala, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ASHIA BEGUM,** Aged about 46 years W/o. Shaik Imtiyaz Ahmed, R/at No. 30, 2nd Floor, Afsar Building, 5th Cross, Near Rizwan Masjid 5th Phase, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore-560078 declare that my name in Aadhar No. 355729384439 is mentioned as **ASHIA BEGUM** only. But in my Passport No. H9084754 it is wrongly mentioned as **ASHIA BEGUM IMTIYAZ AHMED** swear that my name is **ASHIA BEGUM** only and I have declared this as per affidavit sworn to before Aravind Patil G.G. & Notary Bangalore on 13-03-2021

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **(OLA NAME) ISHANK OMPRAKASH SHARMA** S/o Om Prakash Sharma, Residing at No. D2231, Brigade Buena Vista , Budigere Cross Flyover, Bommenahalli, Mundur, Bengaluru Rural - 560 049, have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) ISHANK OMPRAKASH SHARMA** to **(NEW NAME) ISHANK SHARMA** vide affidavit dated 08.04.2021 sworn before Notary Hemalatha. P, Bangalore.

ANNOUNCEMENT
I, BABU S/o Late Syed Mahaboob R/o at No. Seethanayakanahalli Village and Hobli, Hoskote Post, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, Karnataka State - 563130 do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under: That I am the citizen of Indian, that I hereby declare that my name mentioned in some documents written as BABU and my driving license name written as **SYED FIRDOSE**, **I hereby declare that both the name pertain to the one and same person BABU.** That my real name **Babu.**, that it is my true and correct statement, vide affidavit dated 09.04.2021, sworn before Notary C. Ashwathnarayana, Malur Taluk, Karnataka.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, CHETANA MARUTI PATGAR, Residing at No. 1633, Banashankari 6th Stage, Vrushabavati Nagar, 4th Block, Banashankari Doddakallasandra, Bengaluru, have changed my old name from **CHETAN PATGAR** to **CHETANA MARUTI PATGAR** vide affidavit dated 31.03.2021 sworn before Notary G.R Rajanna, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MARUTI GANAPATI PATGAR, Residing at No. 1633, Banashankari 6th Stage, Vrushabavati Nagar, 4th Block, Banashankari Doddakallasandra, Bengaluru, have changed my old name from **MARUTI PATAGAR** to **MARUTI GANAPATI PATGAR** vide affidavit dated 31.03.2021 sworn before Notary G.R Rajanna, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ABHINAV GUPTA F/o Aaradhya Gupta R/o: #602, Block-13, Alps, Heritage Estate, Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560 064 have changed my minor son's name from **AARADHYA GUPTA** to **AARADHY GUPTA** vide affidavit dated 07.04.2021 sworn to before Notary Public G.P Chaya, Bengaluru.

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DOCUMENT LOST
I, Smt. K.V. Meenakshi W/o, Late, M. Nagaraj Aged about 58 years, residing at, Doddagattiganabbe Village, Kasaba hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, has lost my husband M Nagara's Registered Gift Deed dt. 23.08.2001in respect of the properties (1) Sy no. 85, measuring 2 acres 02 guntas, situated at Chikkagattiganabbe village, Kasaba hobli, Hosakote Taluk (2) Sy no. 19/1, measuring 1acre 28.12 guntas (3) Sy no.21/2 measuring 0-03.08 guntas (4) Sy no. 122/1A measuring 0-06 guntas (5) Sy no. 17/2 measuring 0-01.04 guntas of property, Item no. 2 to 5 properties are situated at Doddagattiganabbe village, Kasaba hobli, Hosakote taluk same document is registered vide document No.1463/2001-02, Volume No. 2354 Page No.165-168 dated 23.08.2001 and the 2 cheques bearing no. 026393 and 026394 belongs to Axis Bank were lost while going to my village Doddagattiganabbe. Anybody if found the above mentioned document please inform me to the above mentioned address.

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GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
EDUCATION & WELFARE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, VIJAYAWADA

e-procurement Tender Notice

NIT. No.1 to 8/MD/APEWIDC/VJA/2021-22, Dated 09-04-2021
NIT No.1 to 8 downloading commencement on 10.04.2021 and closing date may be viewed in e-procurement.gov.in

1. Tenders are invited from the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) / Original Equipment Manufacturing firms / Original Equipment Manufacturing Companies for various works / items of 08 works to be used in Mana Badi : Nadu-Nedu Programme with different packages ranging from the estimated cost of Rs.20.91 Crores to Rs.41.80 Crores in 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Further details may be viewed at **http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** Contact No.**08645-295758.**

Note: 1. Changes / amendments if any will only be communicated through above e-procurement platform.

2. Reverse auction applicable as per G.O.Ms.No.67, dated 16.08.2019 of Water Resources (Reforms) Department and G.O No:79, Dated: 25.08.2020 of the Finance (HR.V-TFR) Dept.

Sd/- Managing Director, APEWIDC, Vijayawada

Government of India
Bhabha Atomic Research Centre
Post Bag no. 1. Yelwal, Mysuru 571 130

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Chief Engineer/Superintending Engineer, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mysuru invites on behalf of the President of India, Sealed item rate tenders from experienced Contractors with sound financial & technical capacity for the following work(s):

Tender Reference No.	**BARC(M)/PO&M/NT/ WT-1/2020-21**
Name of work	Maintenance and Service Contract for the centrifugal pump coupled with Diesel generators and Submersible drinking water pumps installed in colonies.
Estimated Cost	**Rs. 1,50,000/-** (Rupees one lakh fifty thousand only)
Period of Completion	**12 Months**
Earnest Money Deposit	**Nil** Bid security declaration in hard copy to be signed ,sealed and put in a seperate cover
Security Deposit	2.5% of tendered value
Performance Guarantee	3.0% of tendered value
Cost of Tender Document	₹ **500/-** (Non-Refundable)
Tender Sale Period	From **12/04/2021** to **19/04/2021** between **10:00 Hrs & 16:00 hrs**
Due date & time for submission of Tender	**23/04/2021 at 1500 Hrs**
Date & time of opening of Tender	**23/04/2021 at 15:15 Hrs**
Place of Tender Submission	Tender Box having identification No. 3at Building No. 2
Place of Tender opening	Pay and Accounts Officer, BARC, Building No. 2
Nature of Work.	Scope of work: The entire scope of works involves carrying out complete overhauling once in a year, preventive maintenance four times in a year, attending to breakdown maintenance in a short notice for one-year period.

Chief Engineer, BARC/RMP
For and on Behalf of The President of India

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A Government Of India Undertaking)

Branch: Malleshwaram 18th Cross, (DP Code: 10424) No.64 & 215, Margosa Road, 18th Cross,Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560055 Phone No.: 080-23346605, Email: cb10424@canarabank.com

DEMAND NOTICE [SECTION 13(2)] TO BORROWER/GUARANTOR/MORTGAGOR

NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

'We, **Canara Bank Malleshwaram 18th Cross Branch** had issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Security Interest Act 2002 by Registered Post with Acknowledgment Due (RPAD) to the addresses furnished to the Bank as mentioned below. Since the notice has not been acknowledged notice could not be served. Further, Bank had served the said demand notices by affixture at the addresses given. The contents of the said notices are mentioned herein below.

Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantor : (1) B.R.Srinivas S/o Ramachandrappa, 2588/2, 9th Main, E Block, Sahakaranagara, Bangalore-560092 **(2) Lalithamma** W/o K.Ramachandrappa 2588/2, 9th Main, E Block, Sahakaranagara, Bangalore-560092, **Surety : Rajeshwari** W/o C. Shivakumar, 1514, EWS, 2nd Stage, Yelahanka new Town, Bangalore-560064.

[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Nature of Facility / Account Number	Limit	Outstanding Amount	NPA Date
04247200000849	Rs. 10,10,950/-	Rs. 9,25,031.41	30.03.2021

Total Liability Amount: Rs 9,25,301.41 (Rupees Nine Lakhs Twenty Five Thousand Three Hundred Forty One Paise only) is due along with interest from **01.04.2021** and costs etc.

Demand Notice Dated : 03.04.2021

Description Property Details : Immovable property bearing 2588/2 in the Layout plan approved by Bangalore Development authority in several survey numbers named as 'Sahakara Nagara' situtated at Kodigehalli, Kothinosahalli and Byatarayanapura Villages, Yelahanka hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore-560092, and site measuring East to West : 23 feet and North to South : 15 feet in all measuring 345 Square Feet owned by Lalithamma W/o K.Ramachandrappa and bounded on: East by : Site No. 2589/1, West by : Road, North by : Site No. 2588/1, South by : Site No. 2588.

You are here by called upon to pay **Canara Bank,** within a period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, the respective amount mentioned here above, failing which **Canara Bank** will take necessary action under the provisions of the said Act, against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the Borrowers and the Guarantors. The powers available to **Canara Bank** under the Act include (i) power to take possession of the secured assets of the Borrower / Guarantors / Mortgager including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realising secured assets and any transfer of secured assets by **Canara Bank** shall vest in the transferee rights in or in relation to, the secured asset transferred as if the transfer has been made by you. In terms of the provisions of section 13(13) of the said Act, you are hereby prohibited from transferring, either by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of your business), any of the secured assets as referred to in the Demand Notice affixed and also Hypothecated / Mortgaged to the bank without prior written consent of the Bank. The notice is issued in terms of Section (13)2 of the said Act.

Date : 10.04.2021 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place : Bangalore **Canara Bank**

STATE BANK OF INDIA
RETAIL ASSETS CENTRAL PROCESSING CENTRE

Authorised Officer's Details:
Name: **Shri. K. Mahantesh,**
E-mail Id: sbi.40690@sbi.co.in
Mobile No: 9449840160
Landline No.: 080-22114022 / 22114021

Address of the Branch:
No. 73, Shantharam Bestowal,
1st Floor, Lalbagh Main Road,
Sudhama Nagar, Bengaluru-560027
Ph: 080-22114022/22114021
Email: sbi.40690@sbi.co.in

"APPENDIX- IV-A
[See proviso to Rule 8 (6)]
e-AUCTION ON 21-04-2021
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

e-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) & Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, State Bank of India, Bengaluru, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on **21-04-2021** for recovery of **Rs. 46,50,612/-** (Rupees forty six lakhs fifty thousand six hundred twelve only) as on 05-04-2021 + interest + Cost and expenses. costs, charges, etc. and further interest at contractual rate from 06-04-2021 & expenses thereon, with incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. due to the Secured Creditor, State Bank of India from **Sri. Balasubrmanya L. S/o. Sri. Lakshman G.**

Reserve Price (Below which the property will not be sold)	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid Increment Amount	Last date for submission of EMD along with KYC documents
Rs.22,41,000.00	Rs.2,25,000.00	Rs.25,000/-	On or before 19-04-2021, 4:00 PM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES WITH KNOWN ENCUMBERANCES (IF ANY)

Tender No.: SBI/RACPC/LALBAGH/2021-22:

All that piece and parcel of residential flat bearing No. 404 in 3rd floor with e-Khatha No. 150200100600520437 in the Apartment known as "Urban Retreat" consisting of Two Bedroom, measuring 1098 sq. ft. of super built up area with undivided land Share of 389.79 sq. ft. with one covered car parking space in the basement floor, standing in the name of Sri. Balasubramanya L. S/o. Sri. Lakshman G. and flat bounded on: East by: Flat No. 403, West by: open Space, North by: Corridor and South by: Open Space, the flat constructed in site converted property bearing 128, Katha No. 1003/226/128, Layout as Deepika Elite measuring East: 114 ft.; West: 112 ft.; North: 87 ft and South: 86 ft totally measuring 9770 sq. ft formed into residentially converted property measuring 10 acres and 2.5 guntas in the Sy. Nos. 22/1, 22/2, 24/2A2, 43/1A and 43/2A, situated at Heelalgi Village Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru.

Bounded by: East: Road, West: Private Property bearing No. Sy. No. 44 , North: Road ,South: Site No. 129

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the links provided by the Secured Creditor, State Bank of India, Retail Assets Central Processing Centre, Sudhamanagar, Lalbagh Bengaluru represented by its Authorised Officer, i.e., (1) www.sbi.co.in (2) www.tenders.gov.in and (3) https://www.bankeauctions.com/Sbi.

Place: Bengaluru
Date : 06.04.2021

Sd/-
(K. Mahantesh)
Authorised Officer

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayat, Shivamogga
Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, Shivamogga

No: EE/RWSS/Dvn/SMG/AE-II/JJM/E-Proc/2021-22/41
Date : 08.04.2021

Tender Notification (Through e-procurement)

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka and as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 2000, tenders are invited for the Advanced works of providing Functional Household Tap Connection for each house under Jal Jeevan Mission for 03 works of approximate amount **Rs 47.88** lakhs to **Rs 84.15** lakhs in Bhadravathi Taluk coming under the limits of Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, Shivamogga District for the year 2021-22 from the contractors registered in Panchayat Raj Engineering Department for the period 2020-25 in Class 3 and above as per Standard Tender Documents for e-procurement of work KW-2 and 3 procedure in Single and Double Cover System. The tenders shall be received on the dates as mentioned in e-procurement through Government of Karnataka e-procurement portal **https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in.**

1) The last date for receipt of filled e- tender documents : **20.04.2021, upto 4.00 P.M.** 2) Technical bid opening date : **22.04.2021 at 11.30 A M.** 3) Financial bid opening date : **24.04.2021 at 11.30 A. M.** 4) Period: **60 days.**

Information on provisions, form fee, EMD details, class of contractors and conditions and tender corrigendum or changes in tender may be obtained in the website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in. More details on e-procurement system shall be had from e-procurement platform.

DIPR/SMG/No.69-04 zenkar/2021-22

sd/- Executive Engineer,
Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, Shivamogga

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A Government Of India Undertaking)

Branch: Malleshwaram 18th Cross, (DP CODE: 10424) No.64 & 215, Margosa Road, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560055, Phone No.: 080-23346605, Email: cb10424@canarabank.com

DEMAND NOTICE [SECTION 13(2)] TO BORROWER/GUARANTOR/MORTGAGOR

NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

'We, **Canara Bank Malleshwaram 18th Cross Branch** had issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Security Interest Act 2002 by Registered Post with Acknowledgment Due (RPAD) to the addresses furnished to the Bank as mentioned below. Since the notice has not been acknowledged and notice could not be served. Further, Bank had served the said demand notices by affixture at the addresses given. The contents of the said notices are mentioned herein below.

Name and Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantor : (1) T.Ganesh S/o V. Tyagarajan, 3, Muniyellappa Garden, 7th Cross, Kadirappa Road, Doddigunta Cox Town, Bangalore-560005, **(2) G.Dhanalakshmi** W/o T.Ganesh 3, Muniyellappa Garden, 7th Cross, Kadirappa Road, Doddigunta Cox Town, Bangalore-560005, **Also Sent to:** T.Ganesh, B13-301, Alur Layout, Nelamangala Road, Bangalore-562123.

[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Nature of Facility / Account Number	Limit	Outstanding Amount	NPA Date
04247730000316	Rs. 4,40,000/-	Rs. 3,30,679.57	30.03.2021

Total Liability Amount: Rs 3,30,679.57 (Rupees Three Lakhs Thirty Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Nine and Fifty Seven Paise only) is due along with interest from **01.04.2021** and costs etc.

Demand Notice Dated : 03.04.2021

Description Property Details : Immovable property bearing Flat No. B13-301 (Third Floor) at Alur Layout, Nelamangala Road, Bangalore-562123 measuring 33.526 square meter Owner by T.Ganesh S/o V Tyagaraja, and bounded by : East by : Stair Case, West by : House No. B13/302, North by : House No. B13/304, South by : Road.

You are here by called upon to pay **Canara Bank,** within a period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, the respective amount mentioned here above, failing which **Canara Bank** will take necessary action under the provisions of the said Act, against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the Borrowers and the Guarantors. The powers available to **Canara Bank** under the Act include (i) power to take possession of the secured assets of the Borrower / Guarantors / Mortgager including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realising secured assets and any transfer of secured assets by **Canara Bank** shall vest in the transferee rights in or in relation to, the secured asset transferred as if the transfer has been made by you. In terms of the provisions of section 13(13) of the said Act, you are hereby prohibited from transferring, either by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of your business), any of the secured assets as referred to in the Demand Notice affixed and also Hypothecated / Mortgaged to the bank without prior written consent of the Bank. The notice is issued in terms of Section (13)2 of the said Act.

Date : 10.04.2021 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place : Bangalore **Canara Bank**

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. **E-Mail id :** crmd@cityunionbank.in, **Ph :** 0435-2432322, **Fax :** 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following property/ies mortgaged to **City Union Bank Limited** will be sold in Re-Tender-cum-Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of **Rs.65,70,611/- (Rupees Sixty Five Lakh Seventy Thousand Six Hundred and Eleven Only)** as on **16-08-2020** together with further interest to be charged from **17-08-2020** onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the Bank by the borrowers / guarantors **No.1) Mr. M.S. Reddy, S/o. Mr. M. Venkatarama Reddy, No.60, Vinayaka Nagara, Behind SFS School, Huskur Gate, Kammasandra, Electronics City, Anekal, Bengaluru - 560 100. No.2) Mrs. M. Rajeshwari, W/o. Mr. M.S. Reddy, No.60, Vinayaka Nagara, Behind SFS School, Huskur Gate, Kammasandra, Electronics City, Anekal, Bengaluru - 560 100.**

Immovable Properties Mortgaged to our Bank
(Properties Owned by Mr. M.S. Reddy, S/o. Mr. M. Venkatarama Reddy)

Schedule - A : All that piece and parcel of land bearing converted Sy.No.138/3, situated at site No.200/1, in New BBMP Katha Nos.1002/1199/1093/882/200/1, in Sy.No.138/3, situated at Sarvabhouma Nagar, Bilekahalli Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore. Measuring:- East to West 120 ft., North to South 80 ft. Totally measuring 9,600 Sq. ft., and bounded on:- East by - 30 ft. Road, West by - Private Property, North by - 30 ft. Road, South by - 30 ft. Road.

Schedule - B : An undivided 263 Sq.ft., share in the land comprised in the Schedule - A Property.

Schedule - C : All that piece and parcel of the Flat bearing No.108 in the First Floor in the Residential Apartment known as NEHA LEGEND to be constructed on Schedule - A Property consisting of Living, Dining and Three Bed Rooms having super built-up area of 1,220 Sq.ft., equipped with Flooring, Sanitary, Electrical Wiring and other facilities with Car Parking Space in the Stilt Floor.

Reserve Price: Rs.42,00,000/-
(Rupees Forty Two Lakh Only)

RE-AUCTION DETAILS

Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale	Venue
29-04-2021	City Union Bank Limited, R.T. Nagar- Bangalore Branch, No.590, HMT Layout, 4th Cross, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore - 560 032. Telephone No.080-23337000, Cell No.9342855177.

Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale :

(1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. **(2)** The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from **The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, R.T. Nagar-Bangalore Branch, No.590, HMT Layout, 4th Cross, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore - 560 032. (3)** The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to **The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd.,** together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of **10%** of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of **"City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. **(4)** For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact : **Telephone No.080-23337000, Cell No.9342855177. (5)** The propertyies are sold on "As-is-where-is", "As-is-what-is" and "whatever- there is" basis. **(6)** The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at **01.00 p.m.** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. **(7)** The successful bidder shall have to pay **25% (inclusive of EMD paid)** of the sale amount **immediately** on completion of sale and the balance amount of **75%** within **15 days** from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of **25%** shall be forfeited. **(8)** The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. **(9)** The successful purchaser shall bear the charges / fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. **(10)** The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. **(11)** The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Place: Kumbakonam, Date: 09-04-2021 **Authorised Officer**

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, **CIN -** L65110TN1904PLC001287, **Telephone No.** 0435-2402322, **Fax :** 0435-2431746, **Website :** www.cityunionbank.com

KARNATAKA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
49, Parisara Bhavana, Church Street, Bengaluru- 560 001
Ph : 080-2558 6520 / 2558 9112 Fax : 080-2558 6321
Email : ho@kspcb.gov.in Website : www.kspcb.gov.in

NO: KSPCB/176/SEO/MINES/EPH/2020-21/88 Dated: 05.04.2021

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION

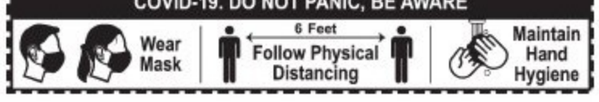
M/s. Yashasvi Enterprises has proposed to undertake quarrying of Natural Sand of capacity 1,12,755 TPA over an area of 13-00 Acres (5.260 Hectares) at **Sy. No. 45/4 and 45/5 of Machenahalli Village and Sy. No. 28/2 and 28/3 of Venkatapura Village, Molakalmuru Taluk, Chitradurga District.** The project has to obtain Environmental Clearance from SEIAA, Government of Karnataka, as per the EIA Notification dated 14.09.2006 (as amended on 01.12.2009), and is required to go through Environmental Public Hearing. As per the SEIAA, Government of Karnataka, Terms of Reference letter (ToR) No. SEIAA 339 MIN 2020 dated: 25.02.2021 and request of the project proponent dated 10.03.2021, the Environmental Public Hearing is being conducted by the Board.

The details of the project are as follows:

1.	Name of the Company & Address:	**M/s. Yashasvi Enterprises** No. 21, Basaveshwara Temple Road, Kuppinakeri Post, Kudlagi Taluk, Ballari District – 583 135
2.	Proposed Location of Mine	**Sy. No. 45/4 and 45/5 of Machenahalli Village and Sy. No. 28/2 and 28/3 of Venkatapura Village, Molakalmuru Taluk, Chitradurga District.**
3.	Details of activity	Proposed to undertake quarrying of Natural Sand of capacity 1,12,755 TPA.
4.	**Pollution control measures:** Chemical Toilet will be provided for the disposal of domestic waste water generated from quarry office. Rainwater harvesting will be carried out in order to improve ground water resources of the area. Regular sprinkling of water on haul and access roads. Regular maintenance of all equipment to minimize particulate matter and gaseous emissions from diesel engines. Plantation of trees will be done along road side and mine office. Trees capable of growing up to 5.0m or more in height will be planted all around the mine boundary.	
5.	Date, time and venue of public hearing	**11.05.2021 (Tuesday) at 11:00 AM at the proposed project area of Sy. No. 45/4 and 45/5 of Machenahalli Village and Sy. No. 28/2 and 28/3 of Venkatapura Village, Molakalmuru Taluk, Chitradurga District.**
6.	Places of availability of project documents as per EIA Notification, which is kept open to public are:	(a) Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Chitradurga District, Chitradurga (b) Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Panchayat, Chitradurga (c) District Industries Centre, Chitradurga (d) Taluk Panchayath, Molakalmuru (e) Gram Panchayath Office, Siddapura and Devasamudra (f) Regional Office, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, Chitradurga (g) SEIAA, Karnataka (Ecology and Environment), Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment, Government of Karnataka, Room No. 706, 7th Floor, 4th Gate, MS Building, Bengaluru – 560 001 (h) **HELP DESK**, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, Ground Floor, No.49, Parisara Bhavan, Church Street, Bengaluru – 560 001

NOTE: Suggestions, views, comments and objections of interested bonafide residents, environmental groups and others located at project site and likely to be affected by the proposed project are invited within 30 days from the date of publication of this Notification. They can also make oral/written/E-Mail suggestions to the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board/Chairman, Environmental Public Hearing Committee (Deputy Commissioner, Chitradurga District, Chitradurga). Interested public can participate in the Public Hearing at the above place. **For details please visit our Website: kspcb.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Member Secretary

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE


SOUTHERN RAILWAY
WORKS BRANCH **MADURAI DIVISION**

TENDER NOTICE NO. MDU-W-04-2021 Dated: 09.04.2021

e-tenders are invited for the following works by the Divisional Railway Manager / works / Southern Railway / Madurai. Tender closing date for Item no 1 to 14 on 04.05.2021 at 14.00 hrs.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	App. Value: Rs. in Lakhs	Period of Completion
1.	Divisional Engineer / North / Madurai Jurisdiction - Development of Parking (5 stations- Paramakkudi, Rameswaram, Manaparai, Udumalaippettai & Kodaikanal Road) / circulating area (4 station-Devakottai Road, Tirumaiyam, Manaparai & Kodaikanal road) & approach road (2 stations-Pamban & Manaparai). Paramakkudi - Granite flooring at concourse and PF area.	156.58	10 months
2.	Madurai - Manamadurai Section: Proposed Defective Weld Renewal at isolated locations from Km 0.000 to 47.570 in between Madurai & Manamadurai stations in Senior Section Engineer / P.way / MG / Madurai & Manamadurai sections. (Alumino Thermic welding at site - 1138 welds)	72.15	9 months
3.	Vanchi Maniyachchi - Tuticorin section : Proposed Through Rail Renewal (Secondary) for a length of 2.130 Kms including deep screening of track on Road Nos. 3,6 & 7 at Tuticorin station in Senior Section Engineer / P.way / Tuticorin section.	33.82	4 months
4.	Virudunagar - Vanchi Maniyachchi section: - Pro.replacement of exg. Steel girders with new PSC Slab / Girders in Br.no.1599 (6x9.14m) @ km577/900-578/000.	220.77	8 months
5.	Manamadurai - Rameswaram Section: Periodical painting of IOH Shed at Rameswaram and FOBs at Sudiyur, Paramakudi, Satirakudi & Mandapam station yard	10.30	6 months
6.	Dindigul - Pollachchi section: Proposed Through Rail Renewal (Secondary) for a length of 2.170 Kms including deep screening work on loop lines of Road No.3 at Pushpattur, Maivadi Road and Udumalaipettai stations in Palani Permanent way section.	34.33	9 months
7.	Madurai Division - Construction of RPF outpost at Ramanathapuram.	54.91	6 months
8.	Karaikkudi station - Construction of one GLR with pipeline arrangement.	14.70	4 months
9.	Madurai Division - Divisional Engineer / North jurisdiction: - Proposed FOB at 4 stations in Tiruchirappalli - Dindigul section (Punggudi, Kolatur, Ayyalur & Tamaraipadi).	517.30	12 months
10.	Madurai Division - Divisional Engineer / North jurisdiction:- Proposed FOB at 5 stations in Tiruchchirappalli - Karaikkudi section (Kumaramangalam, Keeranur, Vellanur, Tirumayam & Chettinad).	689.80	15 months
11.	Divisional Engineer / Central / MDU Jurisdiction - Development of circulating area at Madurai East and Sholavandan, Parking area at Manamadurai and approach road at Sholavandan, Kudalnagar, Samayanallur stations.	32.42	6 months
12.	Dindigul - Madurai (up line) Section - Repairs to low and inadequate cess at isolated locations between Km 457.600 to 458.000 and Km 460.600 to 461.300 in between stations Kodaikkanal Road & Vadipatti in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent way / BG / Madurai section	94.11	6 months
13.	Madurai Jn. - Maintenance of water pipeline system in Madurai Railway colony except old colony, station and pit line for the period of Two years.	39.08	24 months
14.	Assistant Divisional Engineer / Dindigul Sub Dn. - Maintenance of underground sewerage system in Railway colonies, station buildings and service buildings. etc. for the period of two years.	13.71	24 months

Further details are available in detail on website https://www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderer(s) / Contractor(s) to apply for e-tender for works in Madurai Division, need to get enrolled in the **e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the tenderer to check any Corrigendum issued for any correction or modifications uploaded subsequently in the website, the same shall be taken into account while submitting Tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) Madurai.

Follow us on: twitter.com/GMSRailway

Due to the ongoing bus strike in Karnataka and Ugadi, the South Western Railway has decided to extend two pairs of trains between Bengaluru and Mysuru to seven days in a week, instead of six, from April 11

Smuggling case: Customs officers grill Speaker

Collect details about people who visited his house, seize hard disk with CCTV footage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@T'Puram

Speaker P Sreeramakrishnan

THE customs on Friday questioned Speaker P Sreeramakrishnan at his official residence here in connection with the dollar smuggling case. After questioning him for hours, the officials inspected his flat at 'Marutham Royal Wings' at Chackai near the airport.

From neighbouring flat residents, officials collected the details of people who have visited the speaker's residence. They also seized the hard disk containing the CCTV camera visuals to verify the footage in the past one year. The inspection lasted for over two hours.

The officers are at the Customs office in Thiruvananthapuram and they may inspect the apartment once more, a source said.

The sudden inspection was following the statement of gold smuggling accused Swapna Suresh. According to the document submitted by the agency in the High Court, Swapna had stated that she had handed over the dollars to Sreeramakrishnan at his flat and also alleged that the speaker tried to cozy up to her with 'dirty' intentions. She also said Sreeramakrishnan used to call her to his flat, which according to her belonged to the speaker, but was in the name of someone else, and told her about its real ownership to make her feel safe.

According to the document, Swapna had told the agency: "Sreeramakrishnan had called me to his flat in Marutham apartment and told me that it was his 'hideout'. I went there along with Sarith (another accused in the gold smuggling case) to meet him. However, as I didn't agree to his 'personal interests', the role offered to me in the Middle East College was also cancelled."

Watchman to IIM faculty, tribal man breaks barriers

GEORGE POIKAYIL @Kasaragod

"I was born in this house. I grew up in this house. I live in this house. With lots of happiness, let me tell you an assistant professor of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) took birth here. I want to share my journey from this house to IIM-Ranchi. And I will consider it my success if this fuels at least one person's dreams."

Ranjith R, 28, who has a doctorate in Economics from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, took over the Malayalam internet space a day ago after posting his incredible life journey on Facebook. What especially tore at netizens' heartstrings was the photograph of Ranjith's house of 23 years -- an unplastered door-less two-room shed and a leaky tiled roof wrapped with black tarpaulin.

Sharing the post, Finance Minister T M Thomas Isaac applauded the "extraordinary will power" displayed by Ranjith, whose journey to overcome social and financial backwardness to learn and grow reminded him of former Indian president K R Narayanan.

Ranjith was born to Ramachandran Naik, who worked as a neighbourhood tailor, and Baby R, who was a daily wage labourer under the rural job guarantee scheme, at Kelapankayam in Panathur. The couple, who belongs to the Marathi Scheduled Tribe community, had only studied till Class 5. However, they knew the importance of education, and admitted Ranjith to the government-run Model Residential School (MRS) for boys from tribal communities at Vellachal in Cheruvathur panchayat.

After schooling, he joined St Pius X College in Rajapuram to pursue BA in Economics. This was the time he realised that the going was tough at home. Even as he was considering dropping out to help the family, he saw a job advertisement calling for a night watchman at the BSNL telephone exchange in Panathur: "I studied during the day and worked at night. I was the third rank holder for BA Economics at Kannur University."

After completing his post-graduation at the Central University of Kerala in Kasaragod, Ranjith joined the elite IIT-Madras for his PhD.

At IIT, however, Ranjith felt like he was alone in the middle of a crowd. "Before coming to Chennai, I was used to speaking only in Malayalam."

Ranjith went on to complete his PhD with three publications in four years and three months, and IIT gave him a fellowship for pre-doctoral research for the remaining nine months. Last October, Ranjith applied for the post of assistant professor at IIM-Ranchi a recived an appounment letter by December.

CATCH OF THE DAY

Two fisherman cast their net, hoping for a good catch, in Bheemli, Visakhapatnam, on Saturday | G SATYANARAYANA

Greens oppose helipad location in Mysuru, want to save birds' home

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

ENVIRONMENTALISTS in Mysuru are up in arms against the state government's plan to create a helipad opposite Lalith Mahal Palace Hotel.

They have suggested that the existing helipad near the palace premises, belonging to the royal family, be used instead. Mysureans have started a campaign and voice that Mysuru should not become Bengaluru — "a barren concrete space, where green cover has been lost owing to civic works."

Environmentalists say that the place proposed for the project is a wooded area opposite to the hotel, where over 180 butterfly species and 80 bird species can be seen fluttering, breeding, roosting and migrating. "Initially, we thought that 100 trees will be axed, but when we went on ground, we saw that 600 odd trees have been marked to be axed. Mysuru is a heritage, cultural, green city and we do not want it to become like Bengaluru. We are not opposing the project but there are alternative spaces where heli tourism can be introduced," said M K Sapta Girish, a Mysuru-based environmentalist.

Indian Grey Hornbill

Environmentalists say the helipad near Mysore Palace isn't very far from the proposed location, so considering it as an option would be good. They suggest that there is also Mysuru airport, which is five kilometres away from the proposed location and the vacant large space near Mysuru Dasara exhibition ground, which is also not far and is lying idle.

The space in contention is home to state butterfly- Southern Bird Wing, Malabar Banded Peacock, Scarce Shot Silverline, Indigo Flash, Red Flash, Common Shot Silverline, Red Helen, Lime Swallow Tail, Stripped Pierrot, Western Stripped Albatross.

The area has over 40 host plants for butterflies. The list of birds sighted include Blythes Reed Warbler, Brown Shrike, Gray Wagtail, Brown Flycatcher and Indian Golden Oriole, Indian Grey Hornbill, Common Iora, Purple Rumped Sunbird and Grey Francolin to name a few.

K S Shivashankar, another Mysuru-based environmentalist said already the temperatures are soaring high, now if this green cover is lost, then it will be worse.

Tourism minister C P Yogeshwar, who had proposed the heli tourism concept said, he was not aware of the situation. He said works will be done as per the law. He assured to look into the issue and said that so far nothing was finalised.

Where is the local connect? ask RCB fans

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SOME RCB fans say they are not even demanding that the entire lyrics be in Kannada, but want the local language to be the base and used more often.

"I feel the RCB management should take this matter seriously. When they make such anthems (with less of Kannada), we cannot even call it our anthem. It is just some fashionable song. They just want to make a song, but where is the local connect? I am quite sure that all the RCB fans here are completely disappointed. I am not even saying, make it 100 per cent in Kannada, 70-80 per cent can be in Kannada and the rest can be in Hindi and English," said Sagar Siddu, member of another fan club 'Bleed Namma RCB'.

SECOND WAVE? IF YOU IGNORE VACCINE, COVID NORMS, THERE WILL BE MANY MORE WAVES

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

HISTORY seems to be repeating itself. A year after Covid-19 broke out, the country and the state are back in the same position and witnessing a ten-fold surge in the number of cases registered.

Just before the present spike, there was talk of herd immunity being gained and the pandemic almost reaching the endemic stage. But proving those theories wrong, the country has seen a surge since the second week of March. Karnataka, which had fared well in containing the first wave, has started witnessing a steep increase in the number of cases and there is a fear that a second wave is forming. Not just second, there would be a third wave too if a majority of the population is not vaccinated and people continue to ignore Covid norms, warned experts.

"The more the virus is in circulation, the higher its capacity to mutate. The new variant could be more infectious and lead to third and fourth waves too. We have to contain the spread, now," said Dr Giridhara R Babu, a senior epidemiologist and member of Covid's Technical Advisory Committee.

A police officer fines a motorist for not wearing a mask in Bengaluru | VINOD KUMAR T

What is a second wave?

Dr T Jacob John, a retired professor and head, departments of clinical virology and microbiology, Christian Medical College (Vellore), and former director of ICMR's Centre of Advanced Research in Virology, said repeated Covid spikes could be like waves in the sea. "The wave simply means that the number of infections goes up and comes down again. Each cycle is a 'wave' of coronavirus," he elaborated.

For a second wave to start, you need a sustained rise in infections. This is happening across the state and country now, he pointed out. While Karnataka is one of the six states contributing to a high number of cases, the rising second wave is bad and will get worse, warned epidemiologists.

During the first wave, the peak was in the first week of October when Karnataka saw 10,947 cases per day. But in the just last one week, the state has already reached around 7,000 cases. The situation is grim despite the availability of vaccines, oxygen, beds, knowledge of the virus, testing etc, said epidemiologists and public health experts. They believe that the state may see a peak again by the end of April or early May.

BIG PICTURE

"This time, despite extensive diagnostic and monitoring capabilities, the rate of increase in cases is much faster," said Dr Giridhara Babu.

Reasons driving second wave

While experts believe that there are several reasons contributing to the surge, they stress that mutated variants of the virus with a higher infection rate should not be ruled out. "Though it is unfortunate that we still do not have evidence to say that the surge could be due to a new variant at play, we have to accept that in all possibility, the state may have the Variant of Concern's presence. Also, pandemic fatigue, increased Covid-inappropriate behaviour and big elections and protest rallies with hundreds of people not wearing masks have added to the surge," Dr Giridhara Babu said.

Agreeing, Dr John added that the health ministry may continue to deny it till it is red in the face – just as it did when it came to community transmission during the first wave, but there is no denying the presence of new Variants of Concern in the state.

He said the second wave is peculiarly different in almost all states and across the country. "We have found new variants in many states and this time, there has been increased transmission. This second wave wouldn't have happened if we had detected the variant early and people had not let their guard down," he said.

"It is sad that there is big complacency in handling the present situation. Sector after sector is seeking concessions and most closed spaces continue to function to full capacity. The latest surge is due to people ignoring mask and social distancing norms," said Dr Giridhara Babu.

Even as Bengaluru Urban is leading the surge in the present wave, four other districts -- Mysuru, Kalaburagi, Bidar and Tumakuru — too are big contributors.

How different is this wave?

The second wave is moving faster and, according to preliminary calculations, it is 1.7 times faster than the first wave. A TAC member said, "At this pace, it could go beyond 9,000 daily cases soon. As earlier believed, the case fatality rate (CFR) this time is not lower than the previous wave, with the delayed CFR (using an 18-day lag) indicating that it is as deadly as the first one. We may soon see CFR exceeding the peak of 179 deaths in September."

Also, there are new symptoms in the second wave, including gastrointestinal issues, hearing loss and conjunctivitis.

Experts now also warn about an increase in the number of clusters. "Apartment complexes, institutions, hostels, paying guest accommodations and others have formed clusters," said Dr Ravindra Mehta, pulmonologist, Apollo Group of Hospitals.

Interestingly the R naught value of the state over the last few weeks has stayed above the national value. If the reproductive number for the country stands at 1.53, the state's a R naught is 1.65 as on April 9. This means that 10 Covid-positive people can infect 16 others. The last time Karnataka had a similar R0 was on July 19, 2020 when the State had 59,625 cases.

The second wave is also hitting the younger age groups hard because they are back at work and out on the field. But most of them are asymptomatic.

Concerns and solutions

Experts are worried because people's attitude about the pandemic has changed from absolute fear to total callousness. "I don't think this government is serious in tackling the pandemic. If it was, it should have risk funded vaccination manufacturing companies, allowing them to roll out vaccines faster. Also, the infrastructure to conduct genome tests is needed immediately. Why is the government not doing anything," asked Dr John.

On the increasing R0, Dr Ravi V, nodal officer for genomic confirmation of SARS-COV-2 in Karnataka and also a TAC member, said, "If it crosses one, the propensity of the infection spreading is very high."

He said, "Pandemics of respiratory infections come in waves over two to five years. We had a second wave of Influenza 'A' H1N1 in 2012, three years after the first outbreak in 2009. The 1918 Spanish Flu also lasted for two years. This is a road with multiple speed-breakers and we have to be careful all along. We should expect repeated outbreaks in the next one to two years till we will reach herd immunity. It is possible only through repeated infections and/or vaccinations."

Dr Giridhara Babu too suggested that the best solution to fight off the pandemic is to increase vaccinations rapidly and to ensure that people follow Covid norms.

Dr John said that the government's first priority should be to fund an immediate expansion of facilities for increased production of Covishield and Covaxin. Next would be to speed up approvals for the Russian vaccine Sputnik V, for which the Russian company, Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) has tied up with five Indian vaccine manufacturers to produce 850 million doses this year. "There are at least five other vaccines in the Indian pipeline being developed by Biological E, Zydus Cadilla, Gennova Biopharmaceuticals, SII and Bharat Biotech which should be approved as soon as possible. Bharat Biotech's nasal vaccine and a single-shot vaccine by Johnson and Johnson too should be considered," he added.

Dr Usha Manjunath, Director of Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR) Bengaluru, interacts with students on the occasion of World Health Day in Bengaluru recently. She spoke about the significance of the day, and adverse effects of Covid in achieving the sustainable development goals

Karnataka sees lesser cases than Friday

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

IF anyone is found misusing these relaxation, strict action will be taken against them under the National Disaster Management Act (NDMA) and IPC Section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant).

Vehicles patients and their relatives or providing essential services, will be allowed move at night. Passengers coming to and going from Bengaluru are also allowed to travel but it is mandatory to carry travel documents. Those who are moving after 10 pm should carry ID cards and required documents.

In Tumakuru, the police set up 10 check points across the city. "Those violating the guidelines will be booked under 51 (B) of National Disaster Management Act", warned Superintendent of Police Dr Kona Vamsi Krishna.

In Mangaluru, 45 checkposts were erected in the city police commissionerate limits. Several people returning home from work had to face problems as cops stopped them. At many check posts, people were seen arguing with cops. Police commissioner N Shashikumar visited several check posts to oversee implementation of the night curfew.

Meanwhile, MLAs Vedavyas Kamath and Bharath Shetty met Deputy Commissioner K V Rajendra and Police Commissioner N Shashikumar and urged them not to stop religious events taking place after 10 pm.

The police were out in full force in Kalaburagi, forcing people to return to their houses after 10 pm. In many places, shop owners were seen closing their businesses on sighting the police. In Humnabad, police resorted to mild caning to disperse crowds who had gathered in groups.

Meanwhile, Karnataka continued to see a surge in Covid-19 cases, though the number was less than Friday's figures. On Saturday, 6,955 new positive cases and 36 deaths were reported across the state. According to the health bulletin, a total of 5,70,898 people were vaccinated in the state on Friday. Bengaluru reported the highest number of cases at 4,348. On Friday, Bengaluru had reported 5,576 positive cases.

The total cases in the state till April 10 are 10,55,040 while the death toll stands at 12,849. There were 3,350 discharges on Saturday and the total discharges till date stand at 9,80,519. Also, a total of 405 people were admitted to ICU and the total active cases in the state are 61,653.

The positivity rate now is 7.04 per cent and the case fatality rate is 0.51 per cent. According to health officials, the positivity rate on Friday was 5.88 per cent and the case fatality rate was 0.57 per cent.

They say in the darkest night there is a light beyond

Art Garfunkel

COVID-19: POLITICS OF NOT LEADING BY EXAMPLE

THE THIRD EYE

SHANKKAR AIYAR
Author of The Gated Republic, Aadhaar: A Biometric History of India's 12 Digit Revolution, and Accidental India
shankkar.aiyar@gmail.com

THE numbers are stark and scary. The magnitude of the wave is expounded by the data. India is topping the infection charts again. On Friday, the country recorded over 1.4 lakh new COVID-19 cases and over 700 deaths — that is roughly a 100 cases every minute and a death every two minutes. The force of the surge, some epidemiologists estimate, may see daily case count triple and the death toll can top 2,000 by mid-May.

The spectre unfolding across India represents failures at multiple levels — policy, politics and personal behaviour. Most importantly, it represents contextual amnesia — the collapse of collective accountability, the quarantine of reason and lockdown of pro-active public policy response across states even as the pandemic was alive and kicking. The tragedy of commons is exacerbated by the failure of those in positions of power and influence to deploy the 'power of example'.

On Saturday, the Election Commission asked "political parties to observe COVID-19 guidelines issued by it last year in all seriousness". That the EC should issue a reminder six weeks into the campaign and polling, of guidelines issued in 2020, illustrates the state of affairs. Could the latter day avatars of T N Seshan done better? Arguably, it could have — insisted on caps on number of rallies, limited crowds at rallies, insisted on masking et al. The pictures and videos of the bulging unmasked crowds exemplify super spreader characteristics and spell what may follow. Every political party is on board the troll wagon — in the Centre and in the States — on how the pandemic is being managed or mismanaged. The question is how many of their rallies were Covid appropriate. Indeed, a senior minister in an election-bound state even argued against wearing of masks!

Tragically, even those in positions of power and influence chose not to deploy the power of example — imagine the power of the message, if people were reminded to mask up and adopt appropriate behaviour at the beginning of every rally. For sure, the 'pragmatists' and spinmeisters could argue to the contrary on messaging and limits but the question is why not. What makes a political rally special or immune to the virus! And if there can be limits for marriages and funerals, why not for rallies? It is tempting to place all the blame on political parties and governments. And indeed, the politicos and their regimes have much to answer for. Equally, it is important to ask if it is only governments which are to blame. The causality of case count and casualties is located in the casual, nay reckless behaviour of the public at large. There is some truth to the thesis of 'Covid fatigue' — being unable to do the normal things can weigh on the mind. But, it cannot become an alibi for putting lives at risk.

A WhatsApp forward summed up the psychosis: People believe in the one-in-million chance of winning a lottery but not in the chance of getting infected. Many invested in a sense of exceptionalism, a sense of immortality amidst visible evidence of human mortality, brought out eloquently in the Yaksha Prashna in the epic Mahabharata.

Sometime in January, India and Indians entered what can only be characterised as the karmic phase of the pandemic. Social distancing was always going to be a challenge in India given the density of poverty and population. But what explains the feckless attitude towards masking for safety? Masks are not worn and when worn were everywhere but where they should be — often the trend is to deploy it as a fashion accessory, around the wrist, arm on the chin like a French goatee.

The trade-off between lives and livelihood is inherently a tough call in a pandemic. Yes, the governments opened up markets but economic engagement does not translate into disengagement from individual and collective responsibilities. Did those with the wherewithal to inform the disadvantaged deploy the power of example — insist on masks inside shops at bazaars, in elevators in buildings, on public transport? While there were many who called out, the general tendency has been to let them be.

And this abdication has worsened both loss of lives and livelihoods. William Foster Lloyd and Garett Hardin put forth the idea of how individuals tend to act in self-interest and contrary to common good. They characterised it as the tragedy of commons. In the Indian version of the construct, individual behaviour defies both self and public interest.

The landscape of this pandemic is littered with knowns, unknowns and unknown unknowns. It is natural to hope for normalcy every time a wave subsides but it would be a blunder to let the guard down. As Daniel Kahneman observed 'we think of the future in terms of anticipated memories'. What the future may eventually turn out, what normalcy may look like, is a mystery yet unfolding. The pandemic demands eternal vigilance and it is an uneven contest of chance — the virus needs just one lucky break!

BOFORS, RAFALES & THE BEAUTY OF SIN

POINT OF VIEW

TJS GEORGE

NOBODY wants to be a sinner. But who can avoid sin in this begotten world? The wise tackle this conundrum by joining the right party at the right time. When that is done, all sins are absolved, ignored forgotten and/or exonerated, vindicated, discharged.

The latest to prove this truism of life are two familiar stars, Mithun Chakraborty and Satabdi Roy. Household names in Bengal, they became brand ambassadors of the Saradha chit fund scheme which was once popular with people who wished to put some of their money in ponzi schemes. The Saradha group was a consortium of more than 200 private companies, had 16,000 employees and had collected $4-6 billion from 1.7 million depositors.

In April 2013, the ponzi scheme collapsed. Satabdi Roy found the Enforcement Directorate attaching her assets. But Mithun Chakraborty had no distressing experience of the kind; as coincidence would have it, he had joined the BJP while Satabdi had stuck with Trinamool Congress. Former railway minister Mukul Roy and Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma were also facing heat from central investigation agencies over the Saradha scam. But, as coincidence would have it, they joined the BJP and nothing more was heard about investigations.

In politics, it is not enough to have power. You have to use power, and let people know that you will use power when necessary. Effective politicians use power without qualms. Gain is all that matters. What others might think of them never bothers them.

Textbooks actually spell out the difference between soft power and its opposite. Soft power is the ability to attract, while hard power involves coercion. A Harvard Professor explained that during the Information Age, "Credibility is the scarcest resource." Professor Joseph Nye wrote a book in 2004 with the title: '*Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.'

What accounts for the situation where Anna Hazare succeeded without power and Amit Shah did not succeed despite power? Anna Hazare was merely a driver in the army, but his social involvement made him a figure of history, working with fellow villagers to improve land use and water supply, then inspiring the whole community to rise together to build a school, a temple and village cooperatives. He eventually started campaigning against corruption as well. That of course was a problem too big for a solitary crusader to tackle. When the Right to Information Act was amended in 2019 to give the government some manipulative powers, Hazare accused the Modi government of "betraying the people of this country". Without any hesitation, he said, "This is not democracy. This is dictatorship." His hunger strikes did force the government to remove several hundred corrupt functionaries.

Perhaps it is unfair to expect Hazare traits in Amit Shah. Hazare was at his strongest when he used the moral power of the satyagrahi. Shah would not know what is moral power. If someone took the trouble to explain it to him, he would take time to comprehend it and, when comprehension finally came, he would be bored. He would not waste his time on moral power which can never produce, as he sees it, the magical effects of coercive power.

The situation in today's India surpasses all theories and all impulses. For us today, sin is sin only when committed by non-approved politicians. Under the auspices of those with a lotus badge on their button holes, sin becomes virtue

Even Harold Laski, an idol of socialists, admitted that "the activities of a civilised community are too complex and too manifold to be left to the blind regulation of impulse; there [is] need for a customary standard by which the society in its organised form agreed to differentiate right from wrong."

The situation in today's India surpasses all theories and all impulses. For us today, sin is sin only when committed by non-approved politicians. Under the auspices of those with a lotus badge on their button holes, sin becomes virtue. Under those not wearing the lotus, virtue becomes sin. Every citizen is free to make his choice. Isn't that freedom of choice what defines democracy, and as long as that freedom exists, what is there to complain?

We have a range of freedoms that is unique to us. The French authorities openly said last week that Dassault gave one million euro as "gift" to an Indian middleman in the Rafale aircraft deal. Remember, the deal was "re-configured" after the Modi government came to power. Whispers of it were heard in India, but only whispers. No one bothered — dared — to get the details, dramatically different from the hullaballoo we had over the Bofors scandal in Rajiv Gandhi's days. How wonderful is India's capacity to adjust and accommodate to suit the "power needs" of the moment.

IRREVERENT INDIANS BETRAY BHARAT

POWER & POLITICS

PRABHU CHAWLA
prabhuchawla@newindianexpress.com
Follow him on Twitter @PrabhuChawla

POLITICS is private practice for public panaceas. There are more populist physicians of pandemic politics than patients practising corona caution. Leading by example is not for our abundant advisors who practice punditry over preparation.

Ever since the pandemic hit the world killing almost two million people, India has been celebrating its short-lived success in containing the virus. Till recently, the country had the lowest active cases per million people. It still boasts the lowest fatality rate. But last week, it recorded the highest number of new cases in a single day. Its Covid-19 tally is about to touch 14 million. Recovery rate has plummeted by almost four per cent in less than four weeks. The positivity rate is touching the dangerous digit of over seven per cent. Numerous cities are running out of basic medicines. The vaccination drive has decelerated due to mismatch between demand and supply. Vaccine production cycle was disrupted because of the short supply of imported inputs and financial limitations.

With panic-stricken state governments imposing fresh restrictions on the movement of people, goods and materials, the migration of labour from cities to villages began again. The situation is not as grim as it was a year ago. But the spectre of pandemic resurgence is haunting almost every Indian.

It is not just sitting and former chief ministers and Union Ministers who became Corona Captives; even the rich and famous bunkered in self-declared bio bubbles weren't spared. Most Bollywood A-listers and sports icons were either quarantined or hospitalised. The hostels of illustrious institutions across the country were breached by the virus. Doctors and nurses in prestigious hospitals couldn't escape the attack either. Forget the second or a third wave terminology — the infection's speed alone suggests a towering tsunami of terrifying tenacity. The tragedy is that no one is taking responsibility for the catastrophe.

Political leaders to newly discovered Pandemic Pundits are blaming the public for its revival. They write articles in newspapers, participate in TV debates and parade erroneous expert evidence to formulate formal policy to contain the virus. The bottom line is that the people failed to follow the prescribed protocol promulgated in March last year when the entire nation was locked down for almost four months. Their ridiculous refrain is that a substantial number of citizens hardly wear a mask and maintain social distancing while failing to wash their hands frequently.

During the first few months of the contagion, every leader, social influencer, film star, sports person and even sadhus and astrologers were roped in to promote these simple and economic practices through social media, newspaper advertisements and TV jingles. Top script writers were hired to coin slogans like '*Do gaz ki doori, mask hei zaroori*' (Keep social distance of two yards, mask is necessary. Another was '*Mask nahin to tokenge*' (We'll stop you if you aren't wearing a mask). Every political leader worth his or her salt was posting picture with masks and washing hands for twenty seconds.

But all that competitive cacophony vanished when the corona curve started to flatten. India's pandemic management became a global success story. Perhaps success is India's worst enemy. Administrators and leaders became less vigilant. Entertainers, news organisations, civil servants and businessmen conveniently forgot to enforce the corona protocol. They were seen partying as if fun was going out of fashion. All festivals (there is one almost every week) were celebrated as if the country had vanquished viral viciousness. Designer masks became fashion statements for special occasions. Social distancing is anti-social. As the new wave hits the young, the middle and rich class hard, their assumption that they had accumulated enough antibodies during the lockdown proved fallacious.

The elections made the situation worse. With over 140 million voters in five states, corona caution was sacrificed to lust of power. There was hardly a leader who wasn't seen broadcasting broad smiles from their bedecked chariots without a mask, as thousands of barefaced followers danced and sang slogans beside them. Many mask avoiding netas were conspicuous by their presence at official functions. When they covered their face, it was more to display the exclusive quality of their masks than their utility.

Perhaps, facetious Indians have betrayed India. India has a powerful and effective infrastructure, and social network, which if used effectively, can rout the pathogen. Vaccinating India is a long haul, keeping production and distribution compulsions in mind. India can still control the infection's multiplier effect if the country uses its democratic, administrative, social and religious network to compel corona protocol. Why have none of the luminaries thought of pressing into service the over-three million panchayat members of 2.60 lakh panchayat raj institutions to persuade everyone to wear masks, observe social distancing norms and hand washing? Why were the around 10 million schoolteachers exploited during the census and elections, not drafted to enforce epidemic etiquette? The over-2.50 lakh NGOs collecting funds from mysterious sources did not come forward to help the state machinery. Above all, our 788 MPs and over 4,100 MLAs have hardly been advising people to wear masks.

Mega events that turned out to be super spreaders were allowed and patronised by the rulers to get votes. Not one elected representative has claimed that he or she has ensured substantial or complete compliance of corona conduct in their constituency. Social gurus like Jaggi Vasudev, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and Baba Ramdev are rarely seen advising affluent adherents to stick to protocol. Instead, they have been parading mask-less themselves as if they have acquired royal and infallible immunity.

None of the corporate icons have set up mask-vending machines at public or their own office places. All these personages could have supplemented governmental initiatives with liberal contributions. Even film stars who were alluringly aggressive in the beginning went back to the sets and were infected. Money minting cricket did not stop, fearing a drastic fall in valuation.

The attitude is 'To hell with Indian lives. Long live lucre!' Indians have been defined as contrarians, conformists and argumentative. Their contagion conduct has birthed yet another phrase — the Insouciant Indian. It is said, 'pride goes before a fall.' But VIPs never take the fall for failing the country.

QUOTE CORNER

Murdering a journalist is a despicable, cowardly act. Europe stands for freedom. And freedom of press may be the most sacred of all. Journalists must be able to work safely. My thoughts are with the family of George Karaivaz

Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president

I am sorry to learn the sad news that your husband (Prince Philip) has passed away. I will pray for him and offer my condolences. As we all remember him, we can rejoice that he lived a meaningful life

Dalai Lama, Tibetan spiritual leader

The only way we'll be able to beat this pandemic is if enough people get vaccinated. So join me, Michelle, and Americans everywhere in getting the vaccine as soon as it's available to you

Barack Obama, former US president

MAILBAG

WRITE TO letters@newindianexpress.com

Think for specially challenged

The EC can look into arranging for 'Mobile Polling Booths' for the exclusive use of specially challenged voters. As in the past, 'Pink Booths' was successfully introduced to mobilize voter turnout especially women in rural areas. The EC can introduce such mobile polling booths across all the major locations especially in rural areas. Introducing 'Mobile Polling Booths' will go in a long way to being effective electoral reforms. The EC will further be able to achieve a complete and inclusive voter turn out during polls with the much-needed availability of mobile polling booths. Also, online voting will help to achieve yet another milestone aimed at promoting an inclusive democratic exercise.

Varun Dambal, Bengaluru

Throw out rotten apples

The Lok Ayukta on Friday found Kerala's Minister of Higher Education and Minority Affairs K T Jaleel guilty of nepotism and abuse of power in the appointment of his second cousin as General Manager of Kerala State Minorities Development Finance Corporation Limited. He has been charged with violating the oath of office, and cannot continue as minister. If indeed Jaleel is guilty as charged, the CM must show his colleague the door. Having said so, the Parliament itself must undergo a thorough cleaning inside-out as 43% of lawmakers elected to the Lok Sabha,39% and 57% from the BJP and the Congress respectively have criminal charges against them, according to the Association of Democratic Reforms. Not to condone Jaleel's crime, the entire Indian democracy merits a thorough overhaul to live up to its reputation.

Dr George Jacob, Kochi

Get the facts right

This is with reference to 'Time to challenge this false narratives' (April 10). The author's views based on the inference culled from the various resources are substantial about India's electoral democracy and freedom of citizenry. Even though the V-Dem report has contained malinformation biases about India's political freedom, its comparison of India with other under developing countries in South East Asia is, indeed, shown a bad taste of negligence and without proper research on India's democratic freedom and constitutional rights provided to its citizens. The distinguished features of democracy is secularism , equity and equality assured through constitutional rights to the minority communities.

Chilaka Venkateswarlu, Chennai

Security rules are overlooked

Fire incidents, especially in hospitals, causing untimely deaths and severe damage to properties have become common news. Fire incident in a hospital at Nagpur is the latest news. It is tragic to note that even Covid patients are victims. It was reported on many occasions that they have caused due to short circuit. Thorough probe must be conducted so as to rule out sabotage. Recurrence of such incidence points out chances of involvement of some unscrupulous elements and cannot be construed as caused by negligence alone. No complacency should be there. Truth must come out.

PK Sreevalsan, Kannur

Stop communal politics

It is regrettable that for our politicians, minorities means only Muslims. There are many other minorities living with peaceful co-existences. During election times, the pampering showered by political leaders for the Muslims seem artificial. Why Muslim voters should not vote for a Hindu candidate and why not a Hindu voter should vote for a Muslim candidate? Why religious identity should be highlighted instead of candidate's performance, efficiency integrity and public probity? Claiming wholesale rights on the Muslims that they should vote for them as competitively claimed by political parties are ridiculous. Mamata Banerjee could not digest the sprouting of ISF and the AIMIM's electoral foothold in West Bengal. It is politics that divide the two communities but people live with the spirit of multiculturalism.

K Jayanthi, Chennai

THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: **Manoj Kumar Sonthalia** Editor: **G S Vasu**

Resident Editor (Karnataka): **Santwana Bhattacharya*** Published by **R K Jhunjhunwala** on behalf of Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited, at No. 1, Queen's Road, Bengaluru - 560 001 and printed by him at Express Press, Plot No. 2A, Bommasandra Industrial Area, 4th Phase, Survey No. 46, Part Yarandahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk. Bengaluru - 560 099. **Bengaluru.** Vol. 22, No. 15. RNI Reg. No. KARENG\2000\03040. Phone: 080-22866893. * Responsible for selection of News under the PRB Act. **Copyright:** Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited.

TWEETS OF THE DAY

Piyush Goyal @PiyushGoyal
Those indulging in vaccine politics must know it has a price - lives of citizens. India's vaccination strategy is not a surprise/ an aberration

Alka Lamba @LambaAlka
Compare Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh. The governments of double engine can be seen completely failing .. # COVID19

Tejashwi Yadav @yadavtejashwi
When in doubt go to the library – J.K. Rowling. But in CM Nitish's case, When you feel being less dictator, demolish a heritage library!

SECOND WAVE NATIONAL TRACKER

72.23%
OF INDIA'S TOTAL ACTIVE CASES ARE FROM FIVE STATES: Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, UP and Kerala

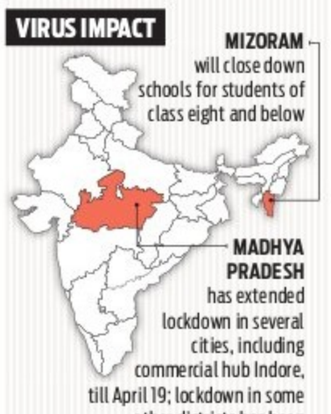
45.65%
OF THE TOTAL ACTIVE CASES ARE FROM 10 DISTRICTS: Nagpur, Mumbai, Thane, Bengaluru, Durg, Pune, Urban, Nashik, Delhi, Raipur and Aurangabad

12 STATES/UTs REPORTED NO DEATHS: Puducherry, Ladakh, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Mizoram, Manipur, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Arunachal Pradesh

WORST-HIT

STATE	NEW CASES	FATALITIES
Maharashtra	58,993	301
Chhattisgarh	11,447	91
Uttar Pradesh	9,587	36

VIRUS IMPACT


MIZORAM
will close down schools for students of class eight and below
MADHYA PRADESH
has extended lockdown in several cities, including commercial hub Indore, till April 19; lockdown in some other districts has been extended till April 22

Police punish commuters for flouting lockdown norms in Jabalpur on Saturday | PTI

RSS chief +ve, hospitalised

Guwahati: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat has tested coronavirus positive and has been admitted to a private hospital in Nagpur, the RSS said. Senior Sangh leader and former general secretary Suresh 'Bhaiyaji' Joshi also tested positive and is currently quarantined, a functionary said on Saturday. The health condition of Bhagwat, 70, is stable.

A man runs along the deserted promenade on Marine Drive during a weekend lockdown in Mumbai; (Right) Police stop commuters at Western Express Highway as Maharashtra announced weekend lockdown | PTI

Maha lockdown 'soon', fresh curbs in Delhi

All parties agree with Maharashtra CM's total shutdown proposal, but BJP says ensure poor are compensated first

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

AN all-party meeting called by Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday agreed with his proposal for 15-day total lockdown to control the explosive Covid-19 situation in the state, but deferred the final decision to Sunday.

The Delhi government earlier in the day ruled out lockdown, but announced new restrictions later in the evening. All social, political, sports, entertainment, cultural and religious gatherings in the national capital have been prohibited. The number of persons allowed at a funeral has been again capped to 20 and at weddings to 50. Colleges and coaching institutions will remain closed while Delhi Metro and buses will run at 50 per cent capacity. Restaurants and bars will also have to operate at 50 per cent occupancy.

In Mumbai, Uddhav said there was no option but to impose complete lockdown as the strict restrictions announced so far were not breaking the infection chain. While allies NCP and Congress backed him, Opposition BJP said financial aid to the poor people should be ensured before announcing the measure. The final decision will be taken at the health task committee meeting on Sunday but the announcement may be made a day later. The CM said if a complete lockdown was not imposed soon, the situation would further worsen. He said every day, more than 55,000 cases are reported and one person is infecting more than 25 people. "If the current situations persist, the health infrastructure will crumble. That should be avoided by implementing a lockdown," he said.

BJP state president Chandrakant Patil said while his party was with the government, the latter should first ensure that everyone who cannot afford to stay at the home is compensated. There should be a proper plan for the lockdown and it should be shared with the people so that they are prepared, Patil said.

Now, Punjab CM flags shortage despite slow vaccination due to farm law anger

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Chandigarh/Jaipur/Mumbai

A beneficiary receives a dose of Covid vaccine at a camp in Jaipur on Saturday | PTI

PUNJAB is the latest state to complain of vaccine shortage, even as Chief Minister Amarinder Singh went to the extent of blaming the "massive anger" among the people over the new farm laws for slow pace of vaccination in the state.

Even then, Punjab is left with only five days of supply (5.7 lakh doses) at the current levels of vaccinating 85-90,000 persons a day, Amarinder said during a video conference called by Congress chief Sonia Gandhi. Singh said he had written to the Prime Minister and the Union health minister to share the supply schedule with states based on their confirmed orders. He said if the state met its target of two lakh vaccines a day, then its current supplies would last only three days.

This is despite the slow vaccination because of the people's support to the farming community for their agitation, he said. "Their anger against the new farm laws was impacting the vaccination drive," Amarinder said.

The crisis is escalating in Rajasthan too, with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot saying in a separate statement that since the next stocks of 3.83 lakh doses would arrive on April 12, the inoculation would have to be stopped in many districts on Sunday, when the 'tika utsav' proposed by the PM begins.

The crisis in Maharashtra, too, continues. State health minister Rajesh Tope claimed Maharashtra had 8 lakh doses available and had been promised four lakh doses in a day while Union minister Prakash Javadekar said the state had a stock of 15.63 lakh doses and called for "proper distribution".

MAHA CRISIS

1.10 cr
doses received by Maharashtra till 6 pm on Friday, as per Union Minister Prakash Javadekar

95 lakh
doses used by the state till April 9

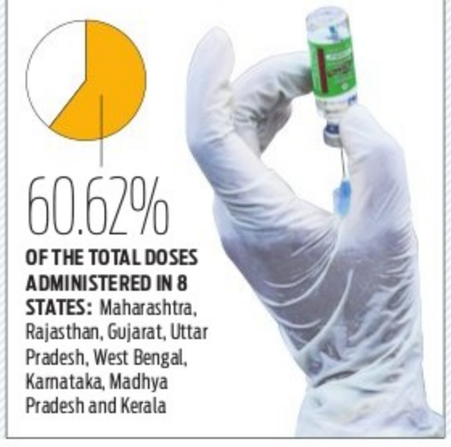
15.63 L
doses remaining with the state

1,121
ventilators to be made available to the state in next 3 days

OTHER STATES THAT HAVE GOT 1 CRORE-PLUS VACCINE DOSES: Gujarat and Rajasthan

SHOT SUPPLY

9.80 cr Cumulative number of doses given across India	54,79,821 HCWs have taken second dose
34 lakh Vaccination doses given in span of 24 hours	98,67,330 frontline workers have received the first dose
89,88,373 healthcare workers have taken the first dose	46,59,035 FLWs have taken the second dose



60.62%
OF THE TOTAL DOSES ADMINISTERED IN 8 STATES: Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala

ALARMING

Indian double mutant strain found in US, other nations

RICHA SHARMA @ New Delhi

AN Indian variant of the coronavirus with two key mutations, now known as 'B.1.617', has been detected in the US, Germany, the UK, Australia and Singapore and enhancing viral replication.

An analysis by experts shows that there are 15 genetic variants, including six spike protein variants (that mediates Covid-19 entry into host cells) and two of these six variants are involved in immune escape as well as increased infectivity.

The double mutant (L452R + E484Q) was announced by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) on March 25 after it was identified in samples of saliva taken from people in Maharashtra, Delhi and Punjab. The variant has a particularly increased prevalence in Maharashtra, where the strain was present at a very low frequency since October 2020.

Emphasizing further genome sequencing and experimental assays to establish how concerning the combination is, Bani Jolly, a geneticist at the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), said both mutations are associated with antibody escape, while L452R has also been associated with a modest increase in infectivity. A recent research paper says that many variants of SARS-CoV-2 that naturally acquire multiple mutations have emerged and emerging mutations can affect viral properties such as infectivity and immune resistance.

The researchers found that two recently emerging mutants — L452R and Y453F — can escape from the restricted cellular immunity.

"These mutations reinforce the affinity to viral receptor ACE2 (enzyme), and notably, the L452R mutation increases protein stability, viral infectivity and potentially promotes viral replication. Our data suggest that the human leukocyte antigen (HLA)-restricted cellular immunity potentially affects the evolution of viral phenotypes, and the escape from cellular immunity can be a further threat of the Covid-19 pandemic," said the paper.

Flicker of hope drowns in second wave

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

SOURCES of income are drying up for others as well. In Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, a group of auto-rickshaw drivers from Mumbai were spotted on their way to Uttar Pradesh. "We're returning home. There's already a weekend lockdown and night curfew in Mumbai. We fear a complete lockdown soon. There is no business for us anymore," says Jaan Mohammad. A resident of Farrukhabad district, his vehicle has a Maharashtra registration number. He and fellow auto-rickshaw drivers are ferrying some labourers too. Jaan expects this number to rise in the coming days.

Some of them could have fought the situation instead of going back home, but memories of last year's lockdown nipped such thoughts in the bud. Working in Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Delhi, Noida, Surat and other places, they were not willing to revisit the days when thousands were stranded without job, food and shelter. With talks of another lockdown doing the rounds, they decided to return home at the first earliest.

Dinesh Ravidas was working as a cook in a Pune restaurant. "With the spike in Covid cases, restaurants and other business establishments were closed. We lost our jobs and decided to come back before our savings got over. Moreover, we didn't want to face the problems we had last year, when we were without food for days. Had we stayed on for longer, we would have died of hunger," says the 32-year-old from Jharkhand's Madhupur district.

Like Ravidas, Gulam Rabbani Ansari, Bablu, Altaf and Shahbudddin also arrived in Ranchi on the Pune-Hatia Express. Trains, and in certain cases auto-rickshaws, are carrying thousands like them to different places in Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. Having seen a ray of hope disappear from, they don't know where the next ray of light will come from.

> **With the spike in Covid cases, restaurants and other business establishments were closed. We lost our jobs and decided to come back before our savings got over**
> Dinesh Ravidas, cook from Jharkhand

Centre mismanaged Covid situation, says Sonia Gandhi

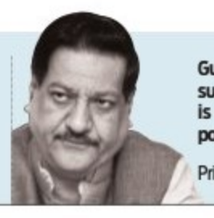
NEW DELHI: ACCUSING the Centre of 'mismanaging' the Covid situation and creating a vaccine shortage in the country by exporting it, Congress president Sonia Gandhi called for cancelling all public gatherings and poll rallies in view of the rising number of coronavirus cases.

Addressing a virtual meeting on Saturday with the chief ministers of the Congress-ruled states and ministers of the party in states where it is in power in alliance with others, she said the priority should be to test, track and vaccinate.

"Covid is surging. As the principal opposition party, it's our responsibility to raise issues and push the government to move away from PR tactics and act in the interest of the people. Therefore, there must be transparency. Governments must reveal the actual numbers of infections and deaths across states, whether Congress ruled or otherwise," she said.

Ex-Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot, Punjab CM Amarinder Singh were also present. *ENS*

> **The failed policies of the Centre has led to a terrible second wave of coronavirus and migrant labourers are forced to migrate once again**
> Rahul Gandhi, Ex-Congress chief



> **Gujarat was given the lion's share of supply of medical equipment...What is this if not discrimination based on politics**
> Prithviraj Chavan, Ex-Maharashtra CM

> **The way there is a spike in coronavirus infection cases, the number of active cases in Madhya Pradesh may reach one lakh by the end of this month**
> Shivraj Singh Chouhan, MP Chief Minister

55,411
CASES, 309 FATALITIES REPORTED IN MAHARASHTRA

Pentagon defends Navy's operation in Indian waters

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Pentagon has defended US Navy ship USS John Paul Jones assertion of navigational rights in India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) without taking prior consent from New Delhi, saying that the move was in accordance with international law.

"I can tell you that the USS John Paul Jones, a Navy destroyer, asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the vicinity of the Republic of the Maldives by conducting innocent passage through its territorial sea in normal operations within its exclusive economic zone without requesting prior permission," Pentagon Spokesperson John Kirby said.

In a move that seemed to ruffle feathers, the US Navy on Friday announced that it had conducted a freedom of navigation operation (FONOP) on Wednesday to challenge India's 'excessive maritime claims'. India strongly reacted to the development saying that it had conveyed its concerns to the US through diplomatic channels.

"India's stated position on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is that the Convention does not authorise other States to carry out in the Exclusive Economic Zone and on the continental shelf, military exercises or manoeuvres, in particular those involving the use of weapons or explosives, without the consent of the coastal state," the ministry of external affairs had said in a statement on Friday.

The MEA also contested the US Navy's 7th Fleet statement of April 7 that the freedom of navigation operation (FONOP) by the guided-missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones "upheld the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses" of the sea recognised in international law by challenging India's "excessive maritime claims".

Kirby also said that it is the responsibility of the US to uphold the freedom of navigation and the rights and freedom and lawful uses of the sea recognised in international law.

International Comm of Jurists seeks protection for people fleeing countries

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

EXPRESSING concern over the violation of human rights in Myanmar, Karnataka (India) section of the International Commission of Jurists has sought protection and shelter for the people fleeing the country fearing persecution and restoration of democracy there.

The Commission and its president B V Acharya passed a resolution disapproving the happenings there and urging restoration of democracy

"The commission places on record its deepest sense of distress and condemns the recent events in Myanmar and urges immediate restoration of democracy and freedom to the people. While every nation is sovereign, International law recognizes sanctions against suppression of human rights. Appropriate sanctions are called for from the international community and it is necessary that the persecuted who flee from that country are given protection and shelter in other countries including India," the statement reads.

The situation in Myanmar continues to deteriorate as the military raises the level of violence against peaceful pro-democracy demonstrators.

According to the UN Human Rights Office over 500 lives have been lost in firing by the security forces in Myanmar, and 2,600 others have been detained since February 1.

POLL DEFEAT

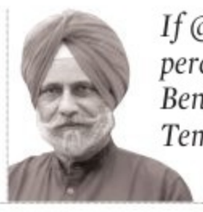
The BJP on Saturday suffered defeat in the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) polls. The newly-floated TIPRA, an umbrella body of tribal parties, swept the polls, winning 18 of the 28 seats

2 RUSSIANS HELD FOR PERFORMING STUNTS IN MUMBAI

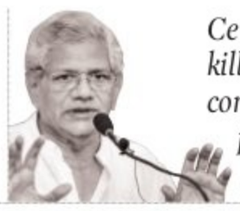
INDIA	Max	Min	INDIA	Max	Min
Ahmedabad	42	26	Mumbai	34	27
Bhopal	38	22	Panaji	33	26
Jaipur	37	24	Patna	39	21
Amritsar	35	19	Lucknow	39	24
Chennai	33	25	Port Blair	32	27
Kolkata	36	27	Imphal	32	13
Srinagar	17	05	Chandigarh	41	22

ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2021 DECIDE

The upcoming phases of Bengal polls are going to be in areas most prone to electoral malpractices by TMC. The BJP requests the EC to deploy sufficient central forces – Bhupender Yadav, BJP general secretary



If @ECISVEEP's conduct had been perceived as non-partisan, violence in Bengal today could've been avoided. Tempers had been running high for days – KC Singh, former diplomat and strategic affairs expert



Central forces firing upon voters & killing 4 is outrageous. Totally condemnable. EC must order a high powered enquiry & punish the guilty – Sitaram Yechury, CPI(M) general secretary

Modi-Mamata blame game over lives lost

PM terms incident fallout of TMC's culture of hooliganism; CM alleges conspiracy, seeks Amit Shah's resignation

PRANAB MONDAL @ North Dinajpur

THE death of four persons in firing by Central security forces near a polling booth in the northern part of the state didn't take long to snowball into a full-blown war of words between the two major rivals in the West Bengal Assembly elections. TMC and BJP blamed each other, with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the exchange of verbals.

Addressing a rally in Siliguri, the biggest city in north Bengal, Modi hit out at Mamata, describing the incident as a fallout of the TMC's "culture of hooliganism" and accusing her of inciting violence. In retaliation, Mamata alleged that the Central forces opened fire without provocation and termed it a "pre-planned" move. She also demanded the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and called him "the conspirator".

"What happened in Cooch Behar is very unfortunate. My condolences are with the family members of those who died. Didi and her goons have become jittery, seeing people supporting BJP. Seeing her era coming to an end, Didi has stooped to this level. But this won't work. I urge the Election Commission to take stern action against the guilty. Inciting people against Central forces and creating hindrances in the poll process won't save Didi."

The chief minister was served a notice by the Election Commission for her statement against the Central forces. While addressing rallies, Mamata had on several occasions accused the forces deployed on poll duty of acting on instructions of BJP and Shah. She had also asked women voters to surround the Central force personnel if they stopped them from casting votes. Referring to that call, Modi said: "Can you imagine a head of the state asking voters to gherao Central forces?"

Refuting to accept the self-defence theory of the forces, Mamata said, "I believe this incident is pre-planned. Home Minister Amit Shah is responsible for this and he himself is the conspirator."

A security personnel takes a senior citizen to a polling booth in Howrah; Prime Minister Modi and CM Mamata Banerjee during poll campaign on Saturday | PTI, BIBHASH LODH

CM RAISES CAPF 'INTIMIDATION' IN EC REPLY

The chief minister was served a notice by the Election Commission for her statement against the Central forces. While addressing rallies, Mamata had on several occasions accused the forces deployed on poll duty of acting on instructions of BJP and Shah. She had also asked women voters to surround the Central force personnel if they stopped them from casting votes. Referring to that call, Modi said: "Can you imagine a head of the state asking voters to gherao Central forces?" Meanwhile, defending her remarks on Central armed police forces, Banerjee is learnt to have told the Election Commission on Saturday that she has the highest regard for CAPF but there have been serious allegations against them of intimidating and influencing the electorate to cast their vote for a particular political party.

71 more CAPF companies rushed to Bengal. The EC on Saturday gave a direction in this regard to the MHA

4 booths in Assam to undergo repolling on April 20. The booths are in Ratabari, Sonai and Haflong seats

No post-poll pact with TMC: Adhir

West Bengal Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury ruled out the possibility of extending support to the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC or seeking her support in case the high-octane Assembly elections throw up a fractured mandate. Accusing the chief minister of trying to communalise the elections, Chowdhury said that the TMC and the BJP might join hands if both the parties fall short of the requisite numbers to form the government. "BJP and communal politics have found a foothold in West Bengal because of Mamata Banerjee. There is no question of supporting the TMC in a post-poll scenario if it falls short of a majority," the Congress leader said on Saturday

Covid amid polls hits Cong office

B K Hariprasad, the Congress' senior observer overseeing campaign management for the West Bengal polls, will now also shoulder the responsibilities of AICC in-charge of the state Jitin Prasada, who tested positive for Covid-19 recently and is in quarantine. Prasada, who was engaged in aggressively campaigning for the Assembly polls, had tested positive for and has been in quarantine. "Mr Jitin Prasada is the AICC in-charge and will remain so. But since he is down with Covid-19, I would be filling in for him during the campaign," B K Hariprasad said. He said he was already looking after campaign management.

'Matuas already citizens, BJP giving false promise'

KOLKATA: Alleging that the BJP is giving false promises to the members of the politically significant Matua community on citizenship, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday claimed that the community members have already been given all rights as citizens.

Banerjee said if the saffron party is voted to power, it will keep the people of West Bengal in detention camps as it has done to "14 lakh Bengalis" in Assam. "Your Didi (the CM herself) has already ensured citizenship right of the Matuas by facilitating land deed to every refugee occupying government or private lands. Why is the citizenship issue being raked up again?" the chief minister said at public meetings held in North 24 Parganas district.

Matuas, originally from East Pakistan, belong to Scheduled Caste and had migrated to India during the Partition and after the creation of Bangladesh.

It once stood behind the TMC but had supported the BJP in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The BJP is saying that it will provide citizenship to them if voted to power. *ENS*

Self-defence, insists police observer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE incident took place a day after the EC served a notice on the CM for her statement against the central forces. Addressing a rally in Siliguri, Modi said the incident was a fallout of hooliganism by Trinamool Congress supporters. Mamata, who will visit Sitalkuchi on Sunday to meet the families of the deceased, demanded the resignation of Union Home minister Amit ShahIn his report, special police observer Vivek Dubey wrote to the commission saying the firing was in self-defence.

EC to cancel poll rallies if Covid norms violated

NEW DELHI: Amid rising Covid cases across the country, the poll panel has flagged instances of star campaigners and political leaders campaigning without masks, and warned it will not hesitate to ban rallies if guidelines issued by it last year are breached.

In a letter to leaders of all recognised political parties on Friday, the EC said, "It is widely known that in the recent weeks, Covid cases are being reported in larger numbers. However, instances of election meetings/campaigns have come to the notice of the commission, where norms of social distancing, wearing of masks have been flouted."

The letter pointed out instances of star campaigners and leaders or candidates not observing Covid-19 protocols. "By doing so, the candidates are exposing themselves as well as the public attending such election meetings to the grave danger of the infection," the letter said. In cases of breach, the EC said it will "not hesitate in banning public meetings, rallies of defaulting candidates, campaigners or leaders without any further reference". *ENS*

TAPE TALK

BJP goes ballistic with Kishor 'chat'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi/North Dinajpur

ON a day West Bengal saw the fourth phase of Assembly elections, BJP used some purported claims of the TMC's electoral advisor Prashant Kishor to claim that the saffron outfit has gained the support of the public in the state.

The BJP IT cell amplified clips of purported audio conversations, in which Kishor is heard saying that Prime Minister Narendra Modi enjoys as much popularity in West Bengal as Mamata Banerjee, while also stating that 27 per cent of Dalits are voting for BJP. IT cell head and co in-charge for West Bengal, Amit Malviya said that these comments made to a few Delhi-based journalists during an audio discussion amounted to the TMC conceding defeat. The clips shared by Malviya also suggested Kishor was saying there is anti-incumbency against TMC.

Kishor made light of the audio conversations. "Glad BJP's taking my clubhouse chats more seriously than the words of its leaders. They should show courage and share the full chat instead of getting excited with selective use of parts of it. I have said this before and repeating again — BJP will not cross 100 (seats) in WB," Kishor tweeted.

"On a day Bengal is voting for the fourth phase, TMC cadre and leaders woke up to find out that Mamata's election strategist (Prashant Kishor) has conceded the election. Voters in Bengal have these videos on their mobile phones and are watching them while queuing up to vote," tweeted Malviya.

Taking purported claims of Kishor as a shot in the arm for BJP's narrative against Mamata's 'minority appeasement policy', Malviya quoted TMC's election strategist having as saying that: "All that the Left, Congress and TMC ecosystem have done in the last 20 years is Muslim appeasement."

Meet the activists who helped free CRPF jawan from Maoists

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

WHEN Dharampal Saini, 91, and Telam Boraiyya, 71, got a phone call from the police on April 5 seeking their help in securing the release of CRPF jawan, Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, they were unsure of how to react owing to their advanced age.

But the next day when they came to know that the Maoists, who had taken the CoBRA commando captive on April 3 following a fierce encounter in the jungles of Bijapur in south Bastar, wanted some mediators to negotiate the release of Manhas, both readily agreed.

"On April 5 I was contacted by the police. They said they want to involve me in a dialogue with the Maoists. I asked them the subject of negotiations. The next day I learnt about the Maoists' demand through the media that they will only release the jawan to some mediators so I agreed," said Saini, or Tauji as he is popularly known.

Boraiyya (turban) and Saini (5th from right) ensured the release | K SHANKAR

"On April 7 night I left Jagdalpur and had a night halt at the CRPF camp in Tarrem, Bijapur. On April 8 morning, I along with Boraiyya, our companions and the journalists left for the village where the jan-adalat was held," Saini said.

Boraiyya, too, was surprised when the police called. "The region is affected by left wing extremism and I never expected it. When the Avapalli sub-divisional police officer called I was astonished but he requested me to be part of the negotiating team," he told this newspaper.

Originally from Dhar in Madhya Pradesh, Saini was a follower of social activist Vinoba Bhave. He now heads Mata Rukmani Sewa Sansthan, an organisation that works among girls in Bastar.

The nonagenarian learnt about the plight of girls in Bastar and sought permission from Bhave to work for their education. He set up an ashram in the 1960s, when the literacy rate in Bastar was around one percent. The ashram now runs 37 schools in Bastar. He was honoured with the Padma Shri for his outstanding achievements in 1991.

"We were dropped at Tarrem in Bijapur by the police on Thursday and our onward journey of about 15 km was with the local journalists on their motor-cycles," Saini and Boraiyya said.

They were told by the Maoists to reach Jonaguda. "The Maoists had sent their messenger to Jonaguda, where we had to wait for 20 minutes. We reached the jan adalat spot around 9 am. The entire proceeding was conducted out by a woman Maoist," Boraiyya said. "The talks with the Maoists were constructive, they didn't raise any demand for the release of the jawan," Saini said.

Boraiyya's family subsists on his pension and a 12-acre of agriculture land. "As the head of a tribal body, I work among our community to create awareness on education and against social evils. We also ensure that the culture of tribals remains intact," he added.

"For us both Saini and Boraiyya were facilitators rather than mediators. Their credibility worked to achieve the goal," said Bastar IGP Sunderraj P.

Saini and Boraiyya revealed the Maoists told them to ensure the jawan reaches his home in Jammu safely.

Bihar cop killed by mob during raid in Bengal

PATNA: A Bihar police official was allegedly beaten to death by a mob during a raid in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district in the early hours of Saturday.

The incident happened in Pantapada village in the Goalpokhar police station limits of the district after midnight when Ashwini Kumar, the Station House Officer of Kishanganj police station in Bihar, was leading a police party to catch a person in connection with a motorcycle theft case, officials said.

Kumar was in the village with a police team to apprehend the accused in the case that was registered in the Kishanganj police station, they said. However, he was surrounded by a mob and allegedly thrashed, officials said.

Later, a team of police personnel from the Panjipara outpost rescued him and took him to the Islampur Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him brought dead, they said.

The West Bengal Police has arrested three persons in connection with the incident. They have been identified as Firoze Alam, Abuzar Alam and Sahinur Khatoon, officials said.

Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal and Kishanganj in Bihar share a border.

Kumar's family initially refused to take the body, alleging a conspiracy. Senior police officials later held a meeting with them and assured of a SIT probe into the incident. *ENS*

11 IAS probationers call on CM Nitish Kumar

Eleven probationary officers belonging to Bihar cadre of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) recently called on Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to get acquainted with various aspects of governance. As per an official source, the chief minister discussed the arrangements made during Covid-19 and how the state is tackling the pandemic with the probationers. The CM is said to have told the young recruits that Covid-19 pandemic made least impact in Bihar on account of awareness among people.

PATNA DIARY

RAJESH K THAKUR
Our correspondent in Bihar
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Purnia opens record number of libraries

A first-of-its-kind initiative, the 'Abhiyan Kitab Dan' taken up by District Magistrate Rahul Kumar has resulted in setting up of libraries in 142 out of 246 panchayats in Purnia district. The initiative became a success after as many as 85,179 books were received through donations from the public. The DM said steps are on to set up libraries in all panchayats by June this year. He has formed library steering committees to run these libraries smoothly and nearly 300 members of the committees will be imparted training from April 12 to 14. "Books, journals and magazines have been made available to readers of all age groups. It will help create reading habit among youth," the DM said. The highest number of 17 libraries were opened in 17 panchayats of Banmakhi.

Kurtha police station adjudged best in Bihar

Kurtha Thaana, located in Maoist-hit Arwal district, has been ranked the 'Best Police Station of Bihar' in 2020 by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. Also, Kurtha station is among the top-10 police stations in the country. A certificate jointly signed by the Union Home Minister and the Union Home Secretary has been awarded to the SHO of the PS. Dr Kamal Kishor Singh, ADG (SCRB) at police HQ, said DGP SK Singhal recently gave away the certificate to SHO Dinesh B Singh. He said Kurtha PS was selected from 16,000 nominations from across the country. In 2019, Bihar's Rajgir Police Staion was adjudged the best in the annual ranking.

Kids with heart ailment get free treatment

The state government recently arranged free treatment to 21 children, who are born with holes in their hearts, in Ahmedabad. CM Nitish Kumar sent off the children by a flight from Patna for free treatment in Ahmedabad along with their parents. Fourteen of them have returned after successful treatment while the rest are undergoing treatment. "All of these children are being provided free treatment under the Bal Hriday Yojna. The entire cost will be borne by the state government," the CM said. The Bal Hriday Yojana aims to take care of medical expenses of children with heart diseases.

6th term

being sought by Chadian President Idriss Deby after 3ww0 years in power

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	21	10	SNY	Los Angeles	23	13	SNY
Colombo	29	25	HR	Melbourne	20	13	LC
Dhaka	36	25	SNY	Moscow	17	2	LC
Dubai	29	23	SNY	New York	16	10	LC
Houston	29	18	SNY	Singapore	32	26	LC
Istanbul	9	7	LC	Toronto	11	0	LC
London	9	0	LC	Washington	24	6	LC

At least 80 more killed in brutal crackdown by Myanmar junta

Details of deaths in Bago took a full day to emerge amid continued violence; UN says security forces prevented medical workers from treating those injured

YANGON

REPORTS emerged on Saturday of more than 80 killed in the latest bloodletting by Myanmar's military, as the country's own ambassador to the United Nations called for "strong action" against the junta.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi in February, with protesters refusing to submit to the junta and demanding a return to democracy. After over two months of military rule, efforts to verify deaths and confirm news of crackdowns have been greatly curtailed by the junta's throttling of mobile data within the country—shunting most of the population into an information blackout.

Details of a brutal crackdown in the city of Bago, 65 kilometres (40 miles) northeast of Yangon took a full day to emerge, as residents told AFP of continued violence from the junta which pushed them to flee to nearby villages.

Young demonstrators flash the three-fingered symbol of resistance as they march in Yangon, Myanmar on Saturday | AP

By Saturday evening, the Assistance Association of Political Prisoners—a local monitoring group tracking deaths—confirmed "over 80 anti-coup protesters were killed by security forces in Bago on Friday".

AFP-verified footage shot early Friday showed protesters hiding behind sandbag barricades wielding homemade rifles, as explosions could be heard in the background. Authorities had refused to let rescue workers near the bodies, said a resident.

"They piled up all the dead bodies, loaded them into their army truck and drove it away," he told AFP.

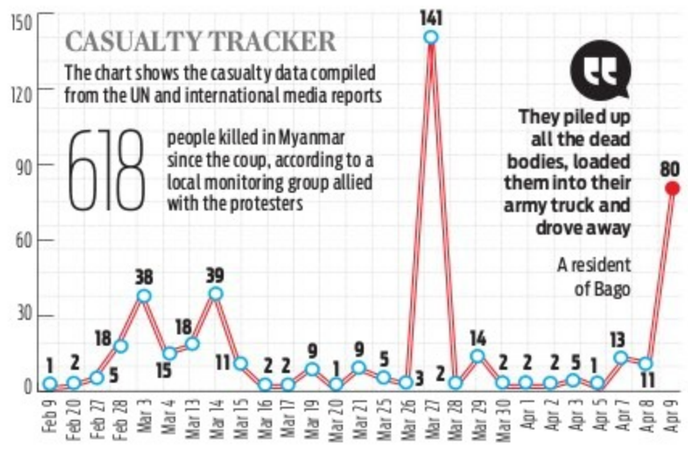
The United Nations office in Myanmar tweeted late Saturday night that it was following the bloodshed in Bago, where medical treatment had been "denied' to the injured. "We call on the security forces to allow medical teams to treat the wounded," it said.

The violence in Bago will add to AAPP's current death toll of 618 civilians killed since the coup. The junta has branded the victims as "violent terrorist people". Despite the daily bloodshed, protesters have continued to take to the streets, with demonstrators manifesting their discontent in pointedly creative ways. In commercial hub Yangon, crimson paint—representing the blood already spilled—was splashed across the streets in view of the historic Shwedagon Pagoda.

The mounting bloodshed has also angered some of Myanmar's 20 or so armed ethnic groups, who control swathes of territory mostly in border regions. Unrest erupted Saturday in northern Shan State, as Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), an ethnic rebel group, mounted a pre-dawn attack on a police station, said TNLA's Brigadier General Tar Bhone Kyaw.

Local media reported more than a dozen police officers were killed, while TNLA said the military retaliated with air strikes on their troops, killing at least one rebel soldier.

State-run television reported in the evening that "terrorist armed groups" attacked the police station with heavy weaponry and set it on fire. *AFP*


CASUALTY TRACKER
The chart shows the casualty data compiled from the UN and international media reports
618
people killed in Myanmar since the coup, according to a local monitoring group allied with the protesters
They piled up all the dead bodies, loaded them into their army truck and drove away
A resident of Bago
150
120
90
60
30
0
1 2 5 18 38 15 18 39 11 2 2 9 1 9 5 3 141 2 14 2 2 2 5 1 13 11 80
Feb 9 Feb 20 Feb 27 Feb 28 Mar 3 Mar 4 Mar 13 Mar 14 Mar 15 Mar 16 Mar 17 Mar 19 Mar 20 Mar 21 Mar 25 Mar 26 Mar 27 Mar 28 Mar 29 Mar 30 Apr 1 Apr 2 Apr 3 Apr 5 Apr 7 Apr 8 Apr 9

Rights group condemns death sentences

Yangon: A rights group condemned Myanmar's junta Saturday for sentencing 19 people to die, in the first known use of the death penalty since the military seized power. Trying cases in a military court means there can be no appeals, and there are "no guarantees of a free and fair trial", said Phil Robertson, deputy director of the Asia division for Human Rights Watch. "It indicates the military are prepared to go back to a time when Myanmar was executing people," he said.

Prince Philip's funeral on April 17

The funeral of Prince Philip will take place on April 17, Buckingham Palace announced on Saturday

BODY TO LIE IN REST AT WINDSOR CASTLE

The funeral of a senior royal family member should take place eight days after the death, according to the National Association of Civic Officers

"The funeral will not be a State Funeral and will not be preceded by a Lying-in-State," The Royal College of Arms, a heraldic organisation closely involved in the implementation of royal protocols and proclamations stated on its website

Prince Philip's body will lie at rest in Windsor Castle ahead of the funeral in St George's Chapel, west of London, on April 17. There will be a national minute of silence before the funeral, the palace announced

30 people

can attend a funeral in the UK from Monday

HARRY TO ATTEND

Prince Harry will travel from his home in Montecito, California, to say goodbye to his grandfather, palace sources said. He may have to navigate Britain's strict coronavirus rules

Travellers from the US must produce a negative Covid-19 test before they get on the plane and must self-isolate for 10 days upon arrival, but that quarantine can end early if a test after five days comes back negative

PRINCE'S FINAL RESTING PLACE

- Philip, a plain-spoken former naval commander, had said he wanted a military-style funeral service in St George's Chapel, where Prince Harry and Meghan Markle married in 2018
- Those present would be family members, friends and heads of Commonwealth countries, *The Mirror* reported
- Prince Philip reportedly did not want to be buried in St George's Chapel or at Westminster Abbey, but instead in Frogmore Gardens at Windsor
- The Covid-secure arrangements may well have suited Prince Philip who, according to newspaper reports over the years, had expressed a preference for a no-fuss funeral

Term limits for US judges under study

WASHINGTON

AMERICAN President Joe Biden on Friday established an expert commission to study reforming the country's powerful Supreme Court, including the explosive question of expanding its bench.

It comes amid growing pressure from left-wing activists to realign the court after its composition tilted sharply to the right under former president Donald Trump.

The Supreme Court sits as the final arbiter on fundamental American legal matters, which can include minority and LGBTQ rights, racism, the death penalty and electoral controversies—and its justices are appointed for life.

Making good on a campaign promise, Biden signed an executive order creating a bipartisan commission of three dozen experts, including legal and judicial scholars, former administration officials and former federal judges, to weigh the highly-charged issue of reforming the body.

One of the panel's main duties is to produce "an analysis of the principal arguments in the contemporary public debate for and against Supreme Court reform, including an appraisal of the merits and legality of particular reform proposals," said the executive order put out by White House.

The order itself did not specifically address expanding the high court.

But in an earlier statement, the White House said the topics to be studied will include "the length of service and turnover of justices on the Court; the membership and size of the Court; and the Court's case selection, rules, and practices."

The order directs the commission to complete its report within 180 days of its first public meeting. Commissioners include Nancy Gertner, a US District Court judge from 1994 to 2011, and constitutional expert Laurence Tribe, a Harvard University professor who also worked in Barack Obama's administration.

The commission's creation comes six months after the controversial confirmation of conservative judge Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court following the September 2020 death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Trump nominated Barrett days after Ginsburg's death, and weeks before the November election—an election Trump lost to Biden. The confirmation process triggered outrage from many Democrats, who pointed to the US Senate Republican leadership's refusal to hold hearings for Obama's Supreme Court pick in early 2016, much less a vote, on grounds that it was too close to that year's November presidential election.

Several Democrats have been open to the idea of expanding the court, as a way of rebalancing the scales that they believe tilted too far to the right after Trump got three nominees onto the bench. *Agencies*

GUN SALUTES RING ACROSS U.K.

LONDON

GUN salutes echoed around the United Kingdom on Saturday as the military paid solemn tribute to Queen Elizabeth II's husband Prince Philip after his death aged 99.

The coordinated 41-round volleys to the former Royal Navy commander were fired at a rate of one per minute from 12:00 in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, as well as at naval bases, from warships at sea, and in the British territory Gibraltar.

Similar salutes—the most according to military protocol—were also held in Canberra and Wellington, as the queen is head of state in Australia and New Zealand. At the Tower of London, a crowd of more than 100 onlookers kept a respectful silence as they watched the Honourable Artillery Company fire shots on the banks of the River Thames.

One onlooker, Heather Utteridge, said she had come to show her respects "for a superhuman".

"It's a great loss to not just the Queen, but actually to the country. He represented stability for all of our lives," the 65-year-old told AFP.

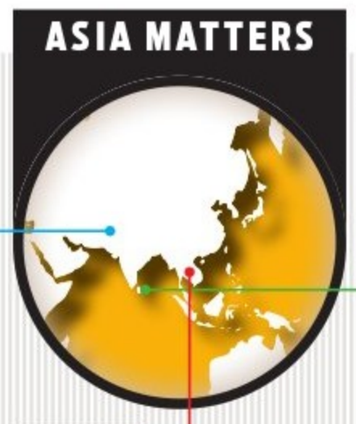
Members of the Honourable Artillery Company fire a 41-round gun salute from the wharf at the Tower of London, to mark the death of Prince Philip, on Saturday | AP

Alexander Beaten, 30, said the royal couple, who had been married for 73 years, had been an integral part of British identity and culture. "We can disagree with the government, we can disagree with so many things that the country may or may not do, but the Queen and Prince Philip are just such a constant," he said.

Sporting events, including Premier League football matches and at English county championship cricket, held moments of silence on Saturday as part of worldwide tributes to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh, during a period of national mourning. Flags are flying at half-mast on government buildings and will do so until the morning after his funeral, the date of which has yet to be announced.

Political campaigning for May local elections stopped, and loyalist leaders in Northern Ireland, who have been rioting for days amid heightening political tensions. *AFP*

ASIA MATTERS



PAKISTAN

Two nurses charged with blasphemy

Two Christian nurses have been booked under blasphemy charges in Pakistan's Punjab province following a complaint by hospital authorities, police said, as people staged demonstrations against the duo demanding strict action against them. According to police, an FIR has been registered against the two nurses, Mariyum Lal and Newish Arooj, working in District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital, Faisalabad, on Friday on the complaint filed by Deputy Medical Superintendent Dr Mohammad Ali. The nurses are accused of removing the stickers inscribed with Islamic verses from the wall of a hospital ward where psychiatric patients are being treated. Deputy Medical Superintendent Ali told reporters that blasphemy charges have been proved against the two nurses by the hospital committee which probed the matter.

CAMBODIA

Quarantine-breakers face jail as cases surge

Cambodia's strongman premier Hun Sen threatened quarantine-breakers with jail time Saturday and warned civil servants they could lose their jobs if they go unvaccinated, as the country grapples with a growing coronavirus caseload. In the past two days Cambodia has registered more than 1,000 infections —many among garment workers and market vendors—bringing the country's tally to 4,081 cases and 26 deaths. Authorities this week banned travel between provinces, imposed a night-time curfew in Phnom Penh and shut popular tourism sites including the famed Angkor Wat archaeological park.

SRI LANKA

Mrs World gives up crown after melee

The reigning Mrs World has relinquished her title while defending her decision to pull the crown off the head of this year's Mrs Sri Lanka title holder, whom she claimed was unqualified to take part in the contest because she is divorced. Caroline Jurie, the winner of Mrs World 2020, has been accused of injuring Pushpika De Silva, who was crowned Mrs Sri Lanka on Sunday at a televised pageant in Colombo. Jurie was arrested on Thursday and later released on bail. In a video statement Friday, Jurie said she stood against 'injustice' and said the pageant was 'tainted." "My only intention was to stand up for the injustice caused to the competitors throughout this competition which was tainted with heavy politicisation," she said. Jurie added she wanted to ensure that every contestant had an equal opportunity.

Worries of sectarian conflict in N Ireland

BELFAST

PRIME Minister of the Republic of Ireland Micheal Martin warned against a "spiral back" into sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland on Saturday, after a week-long streak of unrest continued with 14 police injured in the latest night of clashes.

Disorder sparked in pockets of Belfast—the regional capital of the British province—on Friday night with petrol bombs and masonry thrown at officers, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) said. The total number of officers injured in recent disorder reached 88.

The worst unrest of recent years in the UK-ruled province has mainly stemmed from its unionist community, angry over apparent economic dislocation due to Brexit and existing tensions with pro-Irish nationalist communities. *Agencies*

EXPRESS READ

Saudi executes three soldiers over treason

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia on Saturday executed three soldiers for "high treason", the defence ministry said, accusing them of colluding with an unspecified enemy. The soldiers were convicted of "the crime of high treason in cooperation with the enemy" in a way that threatens the kingdom and its military interests, the ministry said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. The statement named the three soldiers—Mohammed bin Ahmed, Shaher bin Issa and Hamoud bin Ibrahim—without identifying which enemy they were accused of aiding.

Kremlin says it fears full-scale fighting in Ukraine

MOSCOW

THE Kremlin said on Friday it fears a resumption of full-scale fighting in eastern Ukraine and could take steps to protect Russian civilians there, a stark warning that comes amid a Russian troop build-up along the border.

The statement by Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, reflected the Kremlin's determination to prevent Ukraine from using force to try to retake control over separatist-controlled territory in eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine's military chief dismissed the Russian claims that the country's armed forces are preparing for an attack on the rebel east.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits the war-hit Donbas region | AFP

Ukrainian forces and Russia-backed separatists have been fighting in eastern Ukraine since shortly after Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. More than 14,000 people have died in the conflict, and efforts to negotiate a political settlement have stalled. Ukraine and the West have accused Russia of sending in troops and weapons to help separatists, accusations that Moscow has denied.

The White House says Russia now has more troops on its border with Ukraine than at any time since 2014.

Russia also claimed that it had to protect Russian-speakers in Crimea when it sent troops into the Black Sea peninsula and then annexed it in March 2014 following a hastily-called public vote. *AFP*

Iran starts up advanced centrifuges in deal breach

TEHRAN

IRAN announced Saturday it has started up advanced uranium enrichment centrifuges in a breach of its undertakings under a troubled 2015 nuclear deal, days after the start of talks on rescuing the accord.

The United States had said Friday that it had offered "very serious" ideas on reviving the accord but was waiting for Tehran to reciprocate, something Saturday's move signally failed to do.

President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated a cascade of 164 IR-6 centrifuges for producing enriched uranium, as well as two test cascades -- of 30 IR-5 and 30 IR-6S devices respectively—at Iran's Natanz uranium enrichment plant, in a ceremony broadcast by state television.

The television aired no images of the injection of uranium hexafluoride gas into the cascades, but broadcast a link with engineers at the plant who said they had started the process and showed rows of centrifuges.

Rouhani also launched tests on the "mechanical stability" of its latest-generation IR-9 centrifuges. *AFP*

$576.87 bn was India's forex reserve as of April 2, according to RBI data. This was an decline of $2.415 billion over the previous week

Long lockdowns could derail divestment plan

The government has set a disinvestment target of ₹1.75 lakh crore for the current fiscal

ANURADHA SHUKLA @ New Delhi

EVEN as the Centre has said that it will stick to its ambitious disinvestment/divestment target for the current financial year, finance ministry officials fear that if the partial lockdowns in certain parts of the country are extended beyond this month, or continue to intensify, it may dampen market sentiment and may make achieving the targets a challenging task.

"We are moving as usual with the divestment targets. However, if the number of cases increase or lockdowns are extended beyond April, it will have its impact. Businesses just get cautious. The Centre is committed to vaccination for all but it all depends on how it unfolds," a senior official from the finance ministry told this publication.

The official added that the issue will be discussed in detail next week, when Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to hold a meeting on the progress made on the divestment front. She is also likely to select the name of two public sector banks which are to be privatised.

The government, for the current fiscal year, has set a disinvestment target of ₹1.75 lakh crore and, going by the aggresive push, officials feel the target is quite achievable. In fact, the proposed initial public offering (IPO) by LIC itself could garner ₹1 lakh crore for the government. There are estimates suggesting ₹75,000-₹80,000 crore could come from the privatisation of BPCL.

Big divestment plans for this fiscal

- Proposed initial public offering (IPO) by LIC itself could garner ₹1 lakh cr
- ₹75,000-₹80,000 crore could come from the privatisation of BPCL
- The Centre had mopped up just ₹32,835 crore from divestment this fiscal

In the last fiscal year 2020-21, the government had budgeted ₹2.10 lakh crore to be gained through disinvestment, but this figure was badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the Revised Estimates of the recently announced budget, the target was scaled down to ₹32,000 crore as the pandemic delayed planned big-ticket disinvestments.

The government has mopped up ₹32,835 crore from CPSE share sale and buybacks for the fiscal. However as the economy started recovering, the Centre intensified efforts—speeding up approvals for the sale of Shipping Corporation of India, Nilanchal Ispat Nigam Ltd among others. The government also plans to privatise two public sector banks and one general insurance firm this fiscal.

NEWSCOPE

THE SECOND WAVE WILL BE TOUGHER THAN WE THOUGHT

GURBIR SINGH

IT'S a full blown coronavirus second wave the country is facing; and its debilitating impact on economic recovery and peoples' lives is being underestimated.

On Wednesday, we added 126,789 cases of Covid-19 infections, with an average caseload of over one lakh for the past one week. India now not only has the dubious record of the highest infections in the world, but we have pulled ahead of our September 16, 2020 peak of 97,894 cases.

The Union Ministry of Finance has, however, taken an optimistic view. The monthly Economic Review for March this year said the economic recovery was resilient as reflected in food grain production touching 303 million tonnes in 2020-21, a record level of production for the fifth year in a row. Rural employment through MGNREGA has notched up 384 crore person days during FY2021, a rise of 45 per cent compared to the previous year. GST collections have been moving up, outstripping targets.

The World Bank too had revised its projections upwards by a massive 4.7 per cent, forecasting that economic growth will touch 10.1 per cent for 2021-22. Earlier, the Bank had predicted GDP growth at 5.4 per cent for the coming fiscal year.

MISTAKEN OPTIMISM?

The Bank's optimism is based on what it sees as a strong rebound in private consumption and investment growth. But will it now have to revise its figures once again? In fact, Government of India figures hide more than they reveal. For instance, a sudden spike in enrollment under the employment guarantee programme probably implies a breakdown in regular employment, forcing larger numbers to turn to support under MGNREGA.

This seems to be borne out by a mid-March Pew Research Center analysis which found a sharp increase in poverty at the bottom of the pyramid. Says the report: "The number of people who are poor in India (with incomes of $2 or less/day) is estimated to have increased by 75 million because of the Covid-19 recession. This accounts for nearly 60 per cent of the global increase in poverty."

The Pew Research report also found that the middle class in India had shrunk by 32 million in 2020 as a consequence of the downturn, compared with the number it may have reached if the havoc of the pandemic had not been experienced.

RETURN OF LOCKDOWNS

The return of the lockdowns is the new element, not factored in earlier, which is putting the economy in reverse gear. While these are not as severe as the previous March-September 2020 paralysis, every state has been enforcing local lockdowns of varying intensity.

Maharashtra, the worst of the states accounting for nearly 50 per cent of the new infections, has imposed a weekend curfew from Friday evening to Monday morning, and a night curfew during weekdays. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka too have imposed dusk-to-dawn curfews in urban areas.

Though state governments have been careful not to ban construction and industrial activity, the lack of transportation and the shutdown of markets is again creating a stampede of workers wanting to reach the safety of their villages. Gujarat's Ahmedabad and Surat, which house a large migrant population, have been emptying out, while in Mumbai the Central Railway is again scheduling 'migrant specials' to cater to the rush of those moving to UP and Jharkhand.

The new surge in infections is paralyzing hospitality, travel, airlines, and retail markets. Online travel agencies (OTAs) are reporting a huge slump in bookings, while hotels and restaurants, that were just seeing the first stirrings of business, are shutting down once again. The call for local lockdowns has hit retailers and shopkeepers so badly that, in Maharashtra and elsewhere, trade associations are on the warpath with the hashtag #MissionRoziRoti.

Despite optimism that we will see a robust 10-11 per cent growth over the next fiscal, the fact is the second pandemic wave is hitting jobs and fresh consumption. A recent State Bank Research report says: "Business activity Index based on high frequency indicators has declined in the recent week ending 22 Mar'21 with the latest value at 101.7 (the lowest in a month) from 104.6 in the previous week."

How bad this round of slowdown is will be determined by two crucial factors: how long will it take to control this wave of infections? And, two, how effective will be the government's vaccination drive?

The SBI Research report forecasts that the current pandemic may last till the end of May, and may peak around April 15. This is at best a guesstimate, and the report admits governments seem to be fighting a losing battle. "Localised lockdowns/restrictions have not resulted in controlling the spread of infection. This is visible in case of many states including Maharashtra and Punjab," says the report. On the vaccination drive, after a good start, shortages and the Centre playing politics with allotment numbers has again dented the fight. With just 5.8 per cent of the population covered with the first dose, we still have a long way to go.

5 start-ups turn unicorns in just a week, raise cumulative $1.2 billion

BISMAH MALIK @ Bengaluru

EVEN if India's tech start-up scene had experienced a previous golden age, it is unlikely to have come anywhere close to these first few months of 2021. In the middle of a resurgent pandemic, with the country gradually shutting down once again, it has been raining unicorns. This week alone has seen the birth of five new billion dollar start-ups (unicorns), all of which raised a cumulative capital $1.2 billion in capital and were spread across a wide range of segments such as social commerce, content sharing, investment and fintech.

Compared to the eight unicorns that were created in 2019, this year has already witnessed the birth of nine such billion dollar start-ups, clearly a sign of strong investment sentiment in the ecosystem.

And New York-based based investment firm Tiger Global has invested in four out of the five companies that became unicorns this week—Sharechat, Groww, GupShup, and Cred. The investment firm had earlier closed a $6.65 billion global fund and is looking to double down on its investments in Indian start-ups.

$502 million raised by Sharechat	$100 million raised by GupShup
$83 mn raised by Groww	$215 mn raised by Cred

Besides Tiger, another deep-pocketed investor, Sequoia Capital, has also placed several bet among these companies .

Tiger Global has led a $500 million funding round in local social media network ShareChat, almost trebling its valuation at over $2 billion, an $83 million Series D fundraise in Groww, a $100 million round in messaging platform, Gupshup and participated in a $215 million fundraise in credit card payment start-up Cred.

With the pandemic accelerating the adoption of digital solutions across sectors, tech start-ups have leveraged the opportunity to tap into the investments worth millions of dollars and leveraging the millions of users onboarding on to these platforms.

Despite a second Covid wave hitting the country hard, investments haven't dried up, with huge bets relying on the promise of India's hinterlands (beyond metros, tier 1 towns) as as smartphone reach and data accessibility widens.

Besides the unicorns, food delivery major Swiggy also raised $800 million from a bunch of investors recently, taking its valuation to $5 billion, even as the competition heats up with rival Zomato heading for an IPO soon and e-commerce giant Amazon rolling out food delivery in Bengaluru with plans to expand to other cities soon.

However with the investors knocking at the doors of founders, some are wary. Zerodha's founder and CEO Nithin Kamath said recently that even as the big cheques are being written, start-ups are using the same for marketing and advertising which is not his company's focus currently: "We don't need the money, so there's no point in raising money just because someone is ready to give it to you".

Swift dethrones the Alto as top-selling PV in FY21

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

SALES figures for the last financial year 2020-21 (FY21) show that Maruti Suzuki's (MSIL) first premium hatchback Swift has dethroned its entry level car Alto to emerge as India's largest selling passenger vehicle in a single financial year.

MSIL sold 1,72,671 units of the Swift in financial year 2021 as against 1,87,916 sold in FY20. On the other hand, Alto's sale came down to 1,58,992 units in FY21 from 1,90,814 units in FY20. Sales of the Alto, which retained the number one position in the top-selling PVs chart for 16 straight years, has now fallen below that of the Baleno and WagonR.

The Baleno, with 1,63,445 units sold, was India's second most selling car in FY21 while tallboy WagonR came in third with 1,60,330 units.

This big change in ranking is significant since the price gap between the Alto and the Swift is more than ₹2 lakh, the latter being the costlier model. Analysts note that this shows that how consumer preference in recent years has moved towards vehicles that offer rich features and more safety rather than just vehicles that are only easy on the pocket.

First launched on September 27, 2000, the Alto is the first car in India whose cumulative sales has topped the 4 million unit-mark. Alto's sales peaked at nearly 3.50 lakh units in 2010-11 which is almost double the units it sold in the last financial year. Swift, meanwhile, was launched in India in 2005 and breached the cumulative sales milestone of 2.3 million units in 2020.

In the fiercely competitive SUV segment, Hyundai's Creta surpassed the sales of Maruti Suzuki Vitara Brezza by registering the highest growth for any vehicle in the top 10 list. Creta sold 1,20,035 units in FY21 as against 82,074 units in FY20, up by a massive 46 per cent. Brezza sales fell 14.4 per cent in FY21 to 94,635 units.

Shriram Properties files IPO draft papers

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

BENGALURU-based real estate developer Shriram Properties has filed draft papers with the market market regulator Securities and Exchanges Board of India (SEBI) for an initial public offering (IPO) to raise up to ₹800 crore.

According to reports, the company had filed the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) on Friday. The draft papers show that the company proposes to raise up to ₹800 crore through the listing and out of the total IPO size, it plans to raise ₹250 crore through the fresh issue of equity shares and ₹550 crore through an offer for sale.

Shriram Properties has proposed partial exits to its four existing investors—TPG Capital, Tata Capital, Walton Street Capital and Starwood Capital—which hold an around 58 per cent stake in the company.

As for the offer for sale, each of the selling shareholders will be entitled to their respective portion of the proceeds from the issue in proportion to the shares offered by them. The company will not receive any proceeds from the offer for sale, the papers show.

Shriram Properties proposes to utilise the net proceeds from the fresh issue towards repayment and/or pre-payment of debt and general corporate purposes. Reports had said earlier said that the company expects to get the regulator's nod next month and that, thereafter, it will hit the capital market with the proposed IPO.

The company has a major presence in South India and has completed various real estate projects, with many others under construction. Despite Covid, the real estate sector has witnessed two successful public issues of REITs.

(With agency inputs)

Realty in favour?

ian real estate sector has witnessed two successful public issues of REITs and its largest realty firm Macrotech Developers, erstwhile Lodha Developers, is raising up to ₹2,500 crore through an IPO that closed on Friday.

Out of the total inital public offering size, plan to raise ₹250 crore through the fresh issue of equity shares and ₹550 crore through an offer for sale

Shriram Properties DHRP

OPGC chairman inaugurates indoor sports complex at IB power station

During his visit to the IB Thermal Power Station on April 8, 2021, Nikunja B Dhal, Principal Secretary to Government, Department of Energy, Odisha and Chairman of OPGC Ltd. inaugurated the newly constructed indoor sports complex of OPGC at IB Thermal Power Station Colony. Managing Director of OPGC Prashant Kumar Mohapatra and Director (Operations) Sukanta Mohapatra, senior officials and the employees of OPGC, IB Thermal Power Station were present during the occasion.

L Behera is new Zonal Head of UCO Bank

Lalatendu Behera, Deputy General Manager, has joined as the new Zonal Head of Balasore Zone. Earlier he was in-charge of the State-level Banker's Committee in the State. Behera, who joined UCO Bank in the year 1984, has worked in various parts of West Bengal and Odisha. During his 37-year tenure, he has served at the branch level for about 33 years. He has also worked at the Odisha Govt. Secretariat branch (Loka Seva Bhawan) and Odisha Assembly extension (Vidhan Sabha) branch as Branch Head. Behera, who was promoted to the post of Assistant General Manager in 2018, was recently promoted to the post of Deputy General Manager. The Bank has 79 branches in places including Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj, Kendujhar, and Jajpur.

Business & Beyond

GRSE built FPV SCG PS Zoroaster handed over to Seychelles

In line with India's vision of 'SAGAR' (Security And Growth for All in the Region) that puts 'Neighbourhood first', the Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV), SCG PS Zoroaster built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited was handed over to the Seychelles Coast Guard by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in the presence of Wavel Ramkalawan, President of the Republic of Seychelles. The handing over ceremony was conducted in the virtual conference mode in the presence of senior dignitaries representing both countries.

Indian Bank inks MoU with National Bee Board

The Indian Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Bee Board for the development of a portal. On behalf of the Bank, Vikas Kumar, FGM, Delhi and B L Saraswat, ED, National Bee Board inked the pact in presence of Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Agriculture Minister, who also launched the portal named "Madhu Kranti" along with Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Choudhary. The portal has been developed to achieve traceability of sources of Honey and other beehive products on a digital platform.

SER conducts Covid protocol awareness drive

A special drive has been launched by the South Eastern Railway authority to create awareness among all sections of people to maintain Covid-19 protocols as per directives of the Government of India. As a part of the drive, banners and posters on COVID awareness have been displayed throughout SER's jurisdiction. Frequent announcements are being made at important stations on Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) i.e wearing of mask, regular hand washing, maintenance of social distancing and avoidance of crowded places. COVID-19 awareness posts and videos are being regularly uploaded in SER's social media pages. Moreover, all endeavours are being made to encourage the employees to get vaccinated as it is safe and life saving.

ROSE RETAINS TOP SPOT; JOHNSON, MCILROY MISS CUT

Justin Rose squandered a four-shot advantage, then birdied three of the last six holes to seize a one-stroke lead after Friday's second round of the 85th Masters. Defending champion **Dustin Johnson** missed the cut. Rory McIlroy also missed the cut.

Anshu, Sonam work out at airport, book flight for Olympics

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

SLIGHTLY overweight while on board the flight to Almaty. Sleep deprived. On top of that reaching the venue just couple of hours before the event. No wonder Anshu Malik (57kg) and Sonam Malik (62kg) were exhausted ahead of the medal ceremony. Panting for breath, words were hardly coming out of them. They were unable to express their feelings despite realising their dreams of making an Olympic cut during the Asian qualifiers in Almaty. In the end the two had just this to say: "We are very happy. It feels more special as we made it despite the injuries, travel fatigue and sleep deprivation. It was exhausting but we are extremely happy."

The women wrestlers reached the venue only hours before the qualification round because of unavailability of tickets. They could only leave India on Friday morning. If this was not enough, they had a long layoff at Tashkent airport (around seven hours) before flying out. The wrestlers, instead of ruing their ill luck, turned it into an opportunity. Anshu had to reduce her weight. So started running in the Tashkent airport. "We knew we would not get enough time before the competition so I ran at the Tashkent airport to keep my weight in check," she said. They even worked out and warmed up within the confines of the airport.

Anshu | TWITTER

Sonam | UWW

Both Anshu and Sonam, who train together, finished runners-up in their respective weight categories at the Asian Olympic Games Qualifier securing quotas for the Tokyo Games. Earlier, they had won three bouts each to enter the finals of their respective weight categories.

While Anshu lost 4-7 to Mongolian wrestler Khongorzul Boldsaikhan in the summit clash, the injured Sonam conceded the final to Chinese wrestler whom she had defeated earlier in the first round.

Sonam's father Rajender was also all praise for the duo. "Both are fighters. It was not easy especially after reaching the venue only a few hours before the tournament. But they never give up and they have proven themselves enough in the last one year," said Rajender. The 19-year-old Sonam not only lost 0-6 against the Kazakh wrestler Ayaulym Kassymova within a few seconds into the semifinal but also injured her right knee. But she made a stunning comeback to forge a 9-6 win.

However, the injury meant Sonam had to concede the final to Jia Long. "The decision to concede the match was taken as she would have aggravated her injury had she contested in the final. We are hopeful she will be able to compete in the Asian Championships," said head coach Kuldeep Malik.

Anshu and Sonam will join Vinesh Phogat, who had made Olympic cut in 2019, in Tokyo.

EXPRESS READ

U-17 WWC Tournament Director steps down

NEW DELHI: Roma Khanna stepped down as the Tournament Director of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup and AFC Women's Asian Cup, to be held in India in 2022, citing personal reasons. "I would like to thank AIFF and FIFA for placing their trust in me," Khanna said.

De Rossi in hospital after testing Covid+ve

ROME: Italy assistant coach Daniele De Rossi was admitted to an infectious diseases hospital with pneumonia symptoms after testing positive for the coronavirus. The 37-year-old De Rossi was in stable condition at Lazzaro Spallanzani Hospital in Rome.

Boxing coach set to return from Istanbul

CHENNAI: India boxing coach Dharmendra Singh Yadav, who was stuck alone in Istanbul after testing positive for Covid-19, is set to return after his latest test returned negative. Dharmendra was part of the men's team that took part in an international meet in March.

Chennaiyin announce coach Laszlo's exit

CHENNAI: Chennaiyin FC have parted ways with coach Csaba Laszlo, the ISL club announced on Saturday. Laszlo had joined the club just last season and departs after a disappointing 2020-21 campaign. Under his watch, Chennaiyin managed just three victories in 20 games.

LOOKING TO CASH ON DELIVERY

Return of experienced and hungry Bhuvneshwar a major shot in the arm for Sunrisers Hyderabad

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

AFTER just four matches, a hip injury ruled him out of the IPL last season. But Bhuvneshwar Kumar is ready for a long haul in the 14th edition. The Uttar Pradesh pacer has always been a vital cog in Sunrisers Hyderabad's line-up but given his recent form with the white ball, he is expected to be their trump card along with another ace death bowler T Natarajan.

Despite a sluggish start, the 2016 champions made it to the playoffs in 2020. The David Warner-led side, however, will look to hit the ground running when they take on Kolkata Knight Riders at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday and the medium pacer can give them the desired start with his incisive swing bowling. "It is great that Bhuvi is back. He has had a fantastic series against England. We have a lot of depth in bowling and firepower in batting," skipper Warner said on SRH Twitter handle ahead of their opener.

The 31-year-old was in excellent form against England in the recently-concluded ODI and T20I series. He claimed six wickets in three ODIs and finished with an economical spell of 2/15 in the last match helping India pocket the five-match T20I series.

Hyderabad will play their first five matches in Chennai and next four in Delhi and the Aussie opener said slow pitches at the venues will suit his team. "We are playing in Chennai and Delhi in our first 8 or 9 games. The wickets there will be a tad slow which will suit our style of play," said Warner.

Battle of bowlers

Since their inception in 2013, Hyderabad have made it past the group stage every year except 2014 and 2015. Besides winning the title in 2016, they finished runners-up two years later after going down to Chennai Super Kings in the summit clash.

Credit should be given to the bowlers for SRH's consistency in the league. Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who has taken more than 17 wickets in all the four editions he has played in the IPL, has been their mainstay in the bowling department and he along with Bhuvneshwar, Sandeep Sharma and Jason Holder can make life difficult for any batting line-up.

Kolkata outfit, on the other hand, also have useful T20 bowlers in their ranks. Australian quick Pat Cummins will spearhead their attack with young guns Shivam Mavi and Prasidh Krishna to his company.

Spinner Sunil Narine though has struggled for form in recent times but the Caribbean, along with Varun Chakravarthy, can make full use of the slow Chepauk wicket to swing the game in their team's favour.

Dhawan-Shaw off DC strength

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

IT was Delhi openers all the way. Prithvi Shaw and Shikhar Dhawan slammed quick-fire fifties to take the game away from Chennai Super Kings in their opening game. Helped by some sloppy fielding and dropped catches, they stitched together a partnership of 138 runs for the opening wicket to help Delhi win by seven wickets in Mumbai on Saturday.

Shaw hit a 38-ball 72 before he was dismissed by Dwayne Bravo. After his hard-earned wicket, the body language of the CSK players said a lot about the state of the match. It was too little, too late as Dhawan continued to toy with the CSK bowlers, eventually getting out for 85 (54 balls). Dhawan's knock consisted of 10 fours and two sixes.

Earlier, CSK's Suresh Raina gave a timely reminder that he's still got enough firepower in his batting. The left-handed batsman scored a breezy 54 to help Chennai Super Kings to a decent total of 188/7 in 20 overs. Raina had cracked a 36-ball 54. CSK skipper MS Dhoni, however, failed to open his account. Sam Curran (34) and Ravindra Jadeja (26) had chipped in with crucial runs towards the death.

Prithvi Shaw and Shikhar Dhawan hit half-centuries | SPORTZPICS

Brief scores: CSK 188/7 in 20 ovs (Ali 36, Raina 54, Curran 34) lost to DC 190/3 in 18.4 ovs (Dhawan 85, Shaw 72).

SUNDAY WATCH | 7.30 PM @ SS1 | SRH vs KKR

OUTSIDERS SEEK GOOD START

Both Kolkata and Hyderabad suffered because of prominent issues in 2020. Sunday's match is an opportunity is an opportunity to see if they have worked towards fixing them...

TOP-ORDER FLUX

Kolkata's top-order was a revolving door last season. Not many performed at the top of the order and the middle-order was frequently asked to do repair work from inside the power play. Not the ideal scenario in T20s.

ALL EYES ON CUMMINS & BHUVI

While the former struggled for rhythm, the latter played only four games. They have since performed admirably for their countries. Can they now bring that form for their respective franchises?

Swimming nationals in 'jeopardy'

INDRANEEL DAS @ Chennai

THE way things stand the senior swimming nationals in June seems to be in jeopardy. As the Covid-19 cases rise, swimming pools in some of the states are shut again, even for competitive training. Swimmers and coaches feel that if theatres are allowed to operate, malls with 50 per cent capacity, restaurants are open and even bars are running, why not pools for training. If you add elections/political rallies, it just gets a little heady.

The general refrain of athletes and coaches had been, "it is understandable if it were shut for only recreational activities". But for a small bunch of athletes who invested eight to tens years in the sport, where one week break is bad enough the move would lead to both physical and mental issues.

Even the Swimming Federation of India (SFI) is in a quagmire and echoed the predicament of swimmers and coaches. The federation had to cancel nationals in Rajkot in the end of March due to Covid. Their next target was hosting the senior nationals in June. But restriction on pools by some states will have an impact in future meets. There is even a possibility of postponing the nationals too.

"As things stand, senior nationals seems to be in jeopardy," said SFI secretary Monal Chokshi. "Swimming pools were the last to open. In some states it's not yet open. And in some states like Karnataka and Gujarat, pools are closed again. In Delhi, except for Shyama Prasad Aquatics Complex, nothing is open. In states like Bihar, Bengal, Jharkhand, pools did not open. So until and unless pools are open everywhere for swimmers to train, it will be difficult to host any event."

The SFI is closely monitoring the situation and did acknowledge that Covid is indeed a serious problem, but if other establishments and institutions are allowed to function, so should the pools too. Interestingly, in the US and Europe, pools are functioning and were among the first to open. "There are no scientific evidence that suggest virus spreads in the pool," said Chokshi. "We will take all precaution and then train. State government should verify facts before closing pools." Chokshi also said that health of athletes is paramount. But at the same time training for professional athletes too is important.

"If the senior nationals are to be held as per plan in June, this seems difficult now," said Chokshi. "We don't know when the pools will open in different states. In order to conduct nationals we have to send circular by this month so that the states can conduct their meets to select swimmers. It is a long process and needs time. Also swimmers need time to prepare as well. You can't open pool today and conduct nationals tomorrow."

City shocked, Liverpool pip Villa

Stuart Dallas was the star performer for Leeds United with two goals against Man City, on Saturday | AFP

MANCHESTER: Manchester City's march to the Premier League title stalled on Saturday as 10-man Leeds beat the runaway leaders 2-1, Trent Alexander-Arnold's late strike sealed a 2-1 win for Liverpool against Aston Villa. City are counting down to their third title in four seasons, but Stuart Dallas's stoppage-time strike leaves them still needing 11 points from their last six games to clinch the crown. Their first defeat in seven matches in all competitions came after Pep Guardiola made seven changes following their midweek Champions League quarterfinal first-leg win over Borussia Dortmund. Liverpool had lost their previous six home league matches, but Alexander-Arnold clinched their first success in front of the Kop since December as the Reds avenged their humiliating 7-2 defeat at Villa in October.

SMOOTH SAILING

Nethra's journey from Chennai to Tokyo via Gran Canaria

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

GRAN Canaria is a one-stop shop for most things in the sport of sailing. Located off the coast of Spain, the island has produced multiple Olympic champions in sailing: its perfect conditions means elite sailors don't need a second invitation to make Las Palmas, the capital city, their base.

Another sailor who made Gran Canaria their base over the last several years has also reaped rich rewards in the last few days — India's Nethra Kumanan. Two days ago, she became the first Indian woman sailor to book an Olympic spot. At the Musannah Open Championship in Oman, a joint Asia-Africa qualifier, she clinched a spot in the Laser Radial Class by managing a solid performance on all days of racing. Unlike other sports, in sailing you are marked by the number of mistakes you make. She managed to keep it down over the course of a week and walked away with an Olympic spot.

Even if her sailing story began in Chennai — her mum put her in a summer camp when she was 14 and she's been in love ever since, her move up the ladder of success gathered pace after she moved to the Gran Canaria Sailing Academy. "Nethra is the first ever female athlete in the sport of sailing in India, who is attending the @olympics," the Academy posted on their Facebook page. "We are unspeakably proud of her and truly happy to support her on this journey."

When this daily asked her to describe how hard it is to pursue a sport like sailing in India, the 23-year-old is thankful that she managed to find a 'great group' in the Canary Islands. "(In) India, it is hard as it's not a known or popular sport. I have been fortunate enough to find a great group in the Canary Islands where we can sail (all) year round thanks to perfect weather. So, I have committed my journey to the academy there to help me achieve my goal."

In fact, Nethra, who came into the limelight after medalling at the Sailing World Cup last year, even purchased a boat for herself so that she could move around easily. "I have better equipment in Gran Canaria than anywhere else because I can send it around being a laser. I only need my own ropes and the boats are easily available... so I have bought myself a boat to have in Europe for all the racing and training that we do there."

Even if other athletes rued lockdown in 2020 before the Olympics before it was postponed, the Chennai girl sees it as 'extra time' to prepare. "We were lucky to have the extra time to work." Even if mainland Spain was skewered by the virus, Canary Islands was relatively safer. She did not compromise on her fitness sessions during lockdown (she went back to her base rather than coming to India after the original qualifier got postponed in March 2020 to stay close to her coaches and some of her equipment) and was prepared to go full tilt once restrictions eased.

A year later, the reward for all that hard work is a place in Tokyo and the honour of the first woman to represent India in sailing. "I'm happy to have done something I have been trying to do for a while. And to do it with my friends is indescribable."

Nearly a decade ago, she began racing with the likes of Varun Thakkar and KC Ganapathy after that summer camp. Now, the Olympics beckons for all of three of them.

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Pharmaceutical companies Pfizer and BioNTech have asked the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to expand the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for their Covid-19 vaccine to include children ages 12 to 15.

EXFILE • TECHNOLOGY

NEURALINK DEVICE LETS MONKEY PLAY VIDEO GAME TELEPATHICALLY

Elon Musk's startup devoted to meshing brains with computers was closer to its dream on Friday, having gotten a monkey to play video game Pong using only its mind. Musk has long contended that merging minds with machines is vital if people are going to avoid being outpaced by artificial intelligence (AI). We take a look

PAGER PLAYS PONG

A video posted on YouTube by the entrepreneur's Neuralink startup showed a macaque monkey named "Pager" playing Pong by essentially using thought to move paddles that bounce digital balls back and forth on screen. To control his paddle, Pager simply thinks about moving his hand up or down," said a voice narrating the video

Above and to the right, images show the monkey playing a game with a joystick while he is rewarded with banana for good play through a metal straw

IN TESTING PHASE

For now, Neuralink is being tested in animals with the team working on the potential for clinical trials. With the help of a surgical robot, a piece of the skull is replaced with a Neuralink disk, and its wispy wires are strategically inserted into the brain, a previous demonstration showed. The disk registers nerve activity, relaying the information via common Bluetooth wireless signal to a device such as a smartphone, according to Elon Musk

POSSIBLE FUTURE USES

The decoder could be calibrated to enable a person to guide a cursor on a computer screen, potentially letting them type emails, text messages, or browse the internet just by thinking, according to a blog post at neuralink.com. "Our first goal is to give people with paralysis their digital freedom back," the Neuralink team said in the post

HOW THE TECHNOLOGY WORKS

Neuralink devices were implanted on two sides of Pager's brain (left and right motor cortexes) to sense neuron activity, then the monkey played the game a few minutes using a joystick to let the software figure out the signals associated with hand movements

Pager's reward was banana smoothly served through a straw when he successfully batted the digital ball from one paddle to the other, according to the demonstration

After a few minutes, the "decoder" program figured out what neuron signals to look for and **the joystick was no longer needed** for Pager to play the game

NEURALINK'S DEVICE

The brain-machine interface BMI device, Link, is meant to let people use their neurons to operate computers

NEURAL THREADS

Micron-scale threads that are inserted into the brain contain 1,024 electrodes that can pick up neuron activity

UNDER THE HOOD

The device uses application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) for processing neural signals

LOFTY AMBITIONS

Members of Neuralink last year shared a "wish list" that ranged from technology returning mobility to the paralyzed and sight to the blind, to enabling telepathy and the uploading of memories for later reference -- or perhaps to be downloaded into replacement bodies

CHARGER

Inductive charger connects to the implant wirelessly to charge the battery. Source: Neuralink

No second dose for now in 60 nations amid vax shortage

COVAX deliveries have all but halted; WHO may expedite nod for Russian & Chinese jabs

MEDICINE

LONDON: As many as 60 countries, including some of the world's poorest, might be stalled at the first shots of their coronavirus vaccinations because nearly all deliveries through the global program intended to help them are blocked until as late as June.

COVAX, the global initiative to provide vaccines to countries lacking the clout to negotiate for scarce supplies on their own, has in the past week shipped more than 25,000 doses to low-income countries only twice on any given day. Deliveries have all but halted since Monday.

During the past two weeks, according to data compiled daily by UNICEF, fewer than 2 million COVAX doses in total were cleared for shipment to 92 countries in the developing world — the same amount injected in Britain alone.

The vaccine shortage stems mostly from India's decision to reportedly curb the export of vaccines from its Serum Institute factory, which produces the overwhelming majority of the AstraZeneca doses that COVAX counted on to supply around a third of the global population at a time coronavirus is spiking worldwide.

COVAX will only ship vaccines cleared by WHO, and countries are increasingly impatient. Supplies are dwindling in some of the first countries to receive COVAX shipments, and the expected delivery of second doses in the 12-week window currently recommended is now in doubt. In a statement, the vaccine alliance known as GAVI told The Associated Press that 60 countries are affected by the delays.

In vaccination tents set up at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, many of those who arrived for their first jabs were uneasy about when the second would arrive.

"My fear if I don't get the second dose, my immune system is going to be weak, hence I might die," said Oscar Odinga, a civil servant.

Internal WHO documents obtained by the AP show the uncertainty about deliveries "is causing some countries to lose faith in the COVAX (effort)." That is prompting WHO to consider speeding up its endorsement of vaccines from China and Russia, which have not been authorized by any regulators in Europe or North America.

The WHO documents show the U.N. agency is facing questions from COVAX participants about allotments in addition to "uncertainty about whether all those who were vaccinated in round 1 are guaranteed a second dose."

Some experts have noted that Sinopharm and Sinovac, two China-made vaccines, lack published data, and there are reports of people needing a third dose to be protected.

J&J's vaccine under review after 4 serious cases of blood clots

MEDICINE

PARIS: Europe's stuttering vaccine rollout is facing multiple hurdles after EU regulators said they were reviewing side effects of the Johnson & Johnson shot and France further limited its use of the AstraZeneca jab.

FDA, the US drug regulator, said it had not found a "causal" link between the J&J vaccine and blood clots, but that its probe was continuing after "a few individuals" suffered complications.

Much of the world is still in the clutches of the pandemic that has killed 2.9 million people, from Brazil, where the virus is killing more than 4,000 people a day, to Japan where the government has tightened restrictions once again.

And across Europe populations are facing some of the world's toughest anti-virus measures, yet the epidemic refuses to be curbed.

All of France is subjected to restrictions of some form, and the country has so far doled out jabs to more than 10 million people.

But it has repeatedly changed the rules on AstraZeneca's vaccine, first over doubts about its efficacy, then over fears that it could be linked to blood clots.

On Friday it did so again, with Health Minister Olivier Veran saying citizens under 55 who had been given a first shot with AstraZeneca would be given a different vaccine for their second dose. But shortly after he spoke, the World Health Organization said there was "no adequate data" to support switching Covid-19 vaccines between doses.

As Europe continues to reel from constant rows over AstraZeneca's jab, the EU's medicine regulator announced it would be probing a second jab over bloodclot concerns.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) said four "serious cases" of unusual blood clots had been reported – one of them fatal -- with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which uses similar technology to the AstraZeneca one.

BIG BELCH

Plumes of ash rise from the La Soufriere volcano as it erupts for the first time in 40 years on the Caribbean island of St. Vincent | AP

FACT OF THE MATTER

First woman UAE astronaut

SPACE

The United Arab Emirates named the next two astronauts in its space program Saturday, including the country's first female astronaut. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai who also serves as the autocratically ruled country's prime minister and vice president, named the two astronauts on Twitter. He identified Noura al-Matroushi as the UAE's first female astronaut, with her male counterpart as Mohammed al-Mulla. A later government promotional video described al-Matroushi, born in 1993, as an engineer at the Abu Dhabi-based National Petroleum Construction Co.

2 whales wash up on beach

ENVIRONMENT

Two dead whales have washed up on the same stretch of Bangladesh coastline in two days, officials said Saturday, raising suggestions that they were killed by sea pollution. Officials said the second, much longer whale washed up on Himchhari Beach, outside the resort city of Cox's Bazar, at around 8:30 am (08:00 IST) Saturday, just a day after the carcass of another Bryde's whale was found two km from the spot. "The carcass of the whale found today is at least 50 feet long and 10 feet wide. It weighs three-four tonnes," Jahirul Islam, executive director of the Cox's Bazar-based Marine Life Alliance, told AFP.

IMPRINTS IN FOSSILS

Modern human brains evolved much more recently than thought

PALAEONTOLOGY

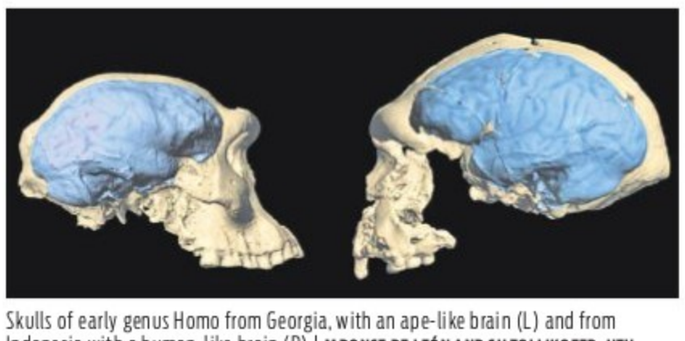
WASHINGTON: Modern brains are younger than originally thought, possibly developing as recently as 1.5 million years ago, as per a new study -- after the earliest humans had already begun walking on two feet and had even started fanning out from Africa.

Our first ancestors from the genus Homo emerged on the continent 2.5 million years ago with primitive ape-like brains about half the size of those seen in today's humans.

Scientists have been trying to solve a mystery for as long as our origin story has been known: Exactly when and where did the brain evolve into something that made us human?

"People had thought that these human-like brains evolved actually at the very beginning of the genus Homo, so about 2.5 million years ago," paleoanthropologist Christoph Zollikofer, a co-author of the study in *Science*, said.

Zollikofer and lead study author Marcia Ponce de Leon examined skull fossils from Africa, Georgia and the Indonesian island of Java, however, and discovered the evolution actually took place much later, between 1.7 million and 1.5 million years ago.



Skulls of early genus Homo from Georgia, with an ape-like brain (L) and from Indonesia with a human-like brain (R) | M PONCE DE LEÓN AND CH ZOLLIKOFER, UZH

Since brains themselves do not fossilize, the only way to observe their evolution is to study the marks they leave inside the skull.

The scientists created virtual images – known as an endocasts -- of what had filled the skulls long ago.

In humans, the Broca area -- part of the frontal lobe linked to speech production -- is much bigger than the corresponding zone in other great apes, said Zollikofer, of the University of Zurich. The expansion of an area results in the shifting of everything behind it. "This backward shift can be seen on the fossil endocasts, when we track imprints of the brain fissures," Zollikofer said.

By studying skulls from Africa, the researchers were able to determine that the oldest ones -- dating back more than 1.7 million years – actually had a frontal lobe characteristic of great apes.

"This first result was a big surprise," said Zollikofer. It signified that the genus Homo "started with bipedalism," or walking on two legs, and that the evolution of the brain had nothing to do with the fact of already being bipedal.

"Now we know that in our long evolutionary history... the first representatives of our genus Homo were just terrestrial bipeds, with ape-like brains," the paleoanthropologist said.

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